

MARGARET BRENT
Adventurer

MARGARET BRENT, ADVENTURER : A
GRANT, DOROTHY FREMONT

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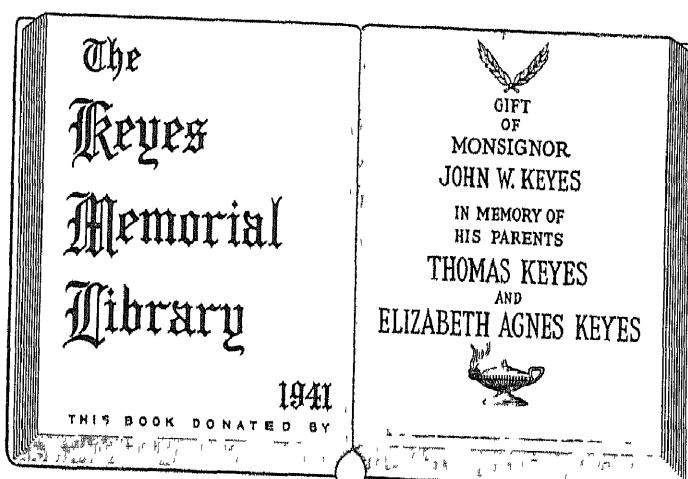
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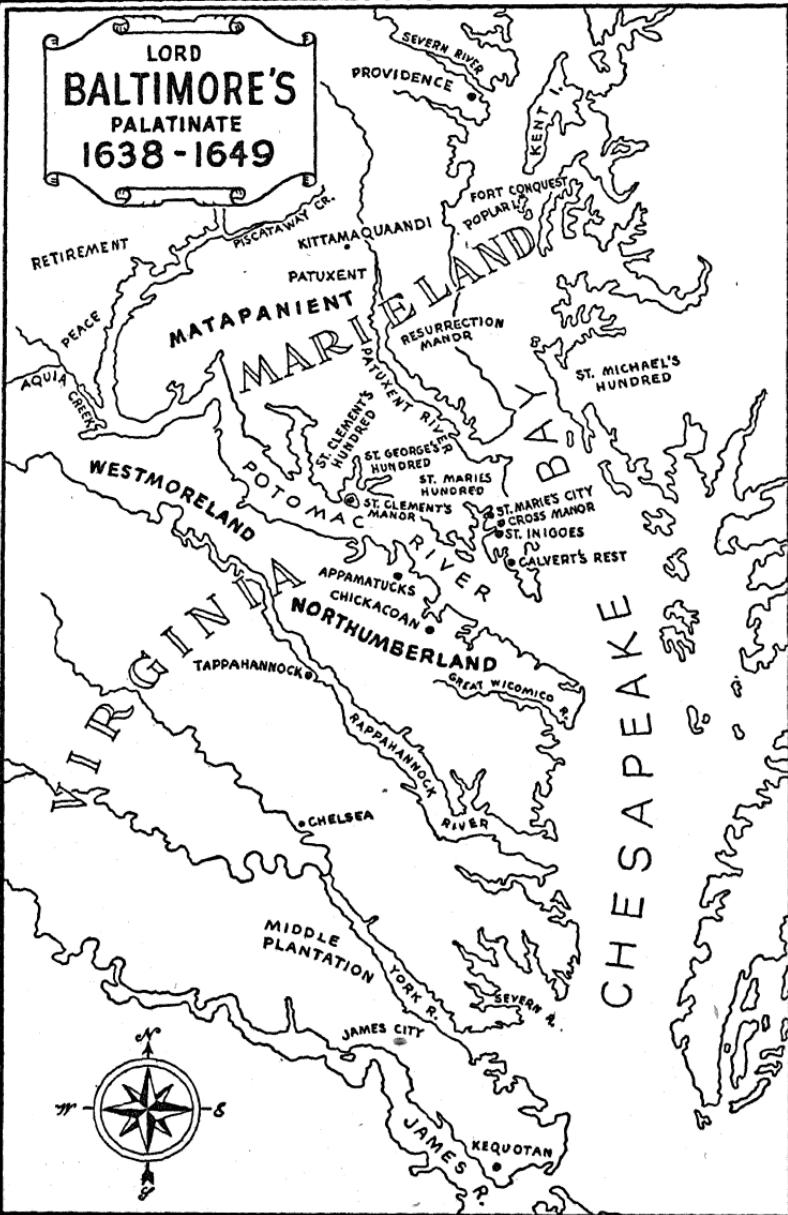
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MARGARET BRENT

ADVENTURER

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1638-1649



MARGARET BRENT

ADVENTURER

A NOVEL BY

DOROTHY FREMONT GRANT

Author of "What Other Answer?"

"War Is My Parish"

13,524

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

NEW YORK • TORONTO

1944

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MARGARET BRENT

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Lovingly dedicated

to

ANNA ADDISON MOODY

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Generous assistance has been extended me in the preparation of this work. For her interest and source suggestions I am indebted to Mrs. Richard Robbins Kane of Baltimore, Maryland, a descendant of the Maryland Brents.

My thanks are also due James W. Dyson, Loan Librarian, Mullen Memorial Library, Catholic University, Washington, D.C., for lending me a manuscript entitled "Catholic Woman of Colonial Maryland" authored by Sister Laurita, S.C.N. of Nazareth College, Louisville, Kentucky. It was through the Rev. Laurence Kelly, S.J., that this manuscript came to my attention. The exhaustive detail given by the author, together with a most extensive bibliography were helpful in the preparation of these chapters.

But for the interest and diligence of Edward J. Farren, S.J., of Woodstock College, Woodstock, Maryland, I would not be indebted to any of the foregoing persons, for it was through his initial efforts that they so graciously came to my aid. I also thank Edward Farren for his search for pertinent material in the Woodstock Letters.

An account of the voyage of the *Charity* may be found in the contemporary letters of the Jesuit missionaries and in the Maryland Archives. But nautical details are beyond the scope of these records. Therefore, I am indebted to my brother-in-law, Gordon Grant of New York, marine painter, builder of ship models, author and playwright, for the "salt" in Chapter 4, Part I, without which I could not have attempted a realistic account of the Brents' voyage to Maryland.

Nor may I with good conscience close these "thank-yous" without also thanking James H. Drake of Manhasset and New York for his fruitful interest in Maryland research, as well as Mr. and

Mrs. Albert Heidt Trageser of Manhasset who, in ways too numerous to mention, have assisted me.

I am deeply grateful to all the foregoing.

DOROTHY FREMONT GRANT.

MANHASSET, LONG ISLAND.

April the 18th, 1944.

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Nota Bene: —

Aside from much miscellaneous detail, the following material has been supplied due to lack of authentic records: —

- a) Details surrounding the trial for sedition.
- b) The exact relationship between the Calvert and Brent families. (Although the names of descendants are correct.)
- c) The quelling of the threatened mutiny.
- d) Cecilius Calvert's letter to Margaret Brent.
- f) A major divergence from fact occurs in the account of Leonard Calvert's arrival in the colony in 1646.

Events removed from their chronological order include: —

- a) The voyage of the *Charity*.
- b) The settlement of Providence (now Annapolis).
- c) The arrival of Captain Mitchell (although his domicile is correct).

Even though founded on historical fact, this is a work of *FICTION*, and therefore, *under no circumstance should it be relied upon for historical reference.* DFG.

PART I

THE ENGLISH BACKGROUND

1638

One

*St. Maries City in Marieland,
Christmas Day, 1637.*

TO the Mistresses Margaret and Mary Brent at Larke Stoke in Gloucestershire in Old England. . . Greetings and a right Merry Christmas from this good land.

The good ship, Reliance, John Martin, Master, is bobbing the tide off the Fort at St. Inigoes, to leave, wind and weather permitting, day after tomorrow: going first to Massachusetts with corn which we are sending our hungry neighbors there, and from thence to Old England with pelts. With a safe arrival you will have this letter from my good brother Cecilius' province; without such (which may God forbid!) I know not how soon I shall have time to write again. Life is busy on the threshold of the wilderness, and I have no time when the Assembly meets, nor during the planting which follows.

On this Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord we of this colony have dedicated our first chapel. True, we have had a chapel since first we came to St. Maries, the former hut of an Indian chief with a hole in the middle of the roof to let out smoke from his fires and since to let the rain in on the faithful. But on this Holy day Father White has blessed our new chapel, which is built of native brick (an excellent clay found beneath our rich black loam here) and is some eighteen by thirty feet and seated at the northwest corner of Middle and Mattapany streets. It is used first by ourselves — and here the faithful flock to the Sacraments — and then by our Protestant neighbors for whatever form of service they may provide among themselves.

As yet no Protestant minister has come to St. Maries, though

we have a fund — 500 pounds of tobacco — against his wages, acquired from Sir Thomas Gerard in the nature of a fine for forbidding some of his Protestant servants books of their own faith. Sir Thomas resented passages in these books, read aloud by his servants, and defaming our Holy Religion, but our Council imposed the fine upon him because all among us here may believe as they choose and read what they choose.

Over the altar in our new chapel is a most effective piece of painting, though since I am not much given to the appreciation of the higher arts, and the profusion of red in this painting at first seeming alarming and over-powering to me, I sought out the artist to enquire of him what his masterpiece did depict. He, a servant of the Captain, our good Councillor, Thomas Cornwaleys, informed me his painting represents the "Flames of Pentecost." As well, indeed, that I made inquiry, else the realistic flames might be an occasion of insurmountable distraction to my devotions!

I cannot well leave this brief account of our new chapel, which I insert as a first inducement to your coming hither, without a word of the saintly Father White who works so industriously among us for the salvation of souls and the Glory of God. Now he would have us permit him to go among the Indians. He contends, and rightly, too, that Father Altham can tend the needs of ours here, whereas he came to convert the savages. But Captain Cornwaleys and Jerome Hawley, our other Councillor, agree that since there are as yet some hostile ones among them such an expedition would not be safe.

I long for the presence of the Brents — all of them, though I know this is impossible. We could use Giles' military genius, and though you would not bring her, we could do with little Anne, too. She must be 12 now, or maybe 13. I often think of her as I last saw her, rosy cheeks, twinkling eyes and merry glee. Children flourish here like tropical flowers.

Our lovely little city is perched above the river on a high bluff: the climate milder, I think, than Gloucestershire, and moist, too, because of so much water about us: but one breathes peace and contentment in the very air. And our soil! The seeds some of our ladies brought out with them flourish far better than in their native England.

The small cabins and houses are set in gardens so like those of Old England you will barely believe them to be elsewhere. The pleasant season is long, hot as Spain in summer, but in the short winter we do have a little frost and light snow. Now and then we have some of those brilliantly clear windswept days which carry me back to my father's estate Baltimore in Ireland's County Longford.

Both of you must be aware that you sent five servants out with me; that they were retained in 1633 and that their term of indenture will expire this year when they will become freemen of this province. Had you closely followed them, I could have given you a grant of 2000 acres, but in 1636 my good brother sent out new "Conditions of Plantation," and now you must bring ten servants for 2000 acres. I will see that those of yours now here receive the land which will be their due, and will provide the clothing, corn, implements of husbandry and other necessaries as is written in their contracts; but now, as I presume your interest in Marieland continues in the avenue of population, do you intend to send or bring more servants?

Margaret, Margaret, have you forgotten that day when you came to Cecilius with the passage money for these servants now here, and in your quick, unusual manner, subscribed yourself with your own hand in his records as "Margaret Brent, Gent. Adventurer"? Where now is this Adventurer?

Perhaps, you are already planning to come with Giles and Fulke who have informed me of their definite intentions. To you all, I say, take heed:

Bring nails, plenty of nails. Even I am bringing nails out of England for presently the Governor must build himself a manor — he should have a lady, too! The site for the manor is selected. I shall call it St. Gabriel's, and in some remote part of the land I plan to build a retreat, Calvert's Rest. I have two manors settled now, though with no master's house upon either. They are Trinity and St. Michael's, and for Cecilius against that day, when he too, can leave England and come among us who so desire his presence, I have planned out St. John's. Our friend, Captain Cornwaleys, has already settled himself upon Cross Manor and is building another up-country which he plans to call Resurrection.

I suggest, too, that you bring saddle horses. We cannot rely upon Virginia in this regard though there is some excellent blood there. We have the wild horse, used by the Indians, and wonderful specimens. They need only cross breeding with our English strains to produce perfection. A good setter or hound would not be amiss, better a pair — especially for Mary, to give her confidence. If you are so disposed I would enjoy a setter myself, and a hound, too, for there is every favorable circumstance here to run the fox who abounds in these parts.

You should correspond with my worthy brother-in-law William Peaseley, who, some two years past in London published "A Relation of Marieland." Perhaps you have a copy. Herein you will find a most useful list of all those things you should bring, not only for your settlement here, but also a description of those beds and other articles you need to provide for the voyage hither.

And a word about the outset of the voyage, knowing well your good Catholic consciences. You will, of course, be asked to subscribe to the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy. The oath of Allegiance will give you no scruples, naturally; as for the other, recall only that many of ours have come hither because they could not in conscience take that oath when for some circumstance it was directly offered them in England. Employ the artifice of distraction or any other mental device to avoid full attention, during the administration of this obnoxious oath. If your conscience will not permit this you cannot leave the realm.

You will not meet the hinderance offered the Ark and the Dove upon our expedition here when Watkins, the London searcher came aboard to give the oaths. We had then already taken on Father White and Father Altham, as well as Brother Gervase, at the Isle of Wight: but they were hidden from Watkins. That official gentleman had been instructed by the Attorney General at the order of the Star Chamber to search our ships, for it was said my good brother's real intention was to send nuns to Spain and soldiers to the Spanish King!

For your home bring all manner of iron implements, and those for agriculture as well. Especially for the home hinges, latches, andirons and such like. And do not forget your waffle iron.

Also coverlets and curtains, some good Wilton if you can procure it. I am informed there has been a great sickness in the mills? And I am told, too, that nearby the Wilton mills a contraption called a "saw-mill" was erected and then torn down because it was seen to be a machine which would deprive the laboring poor of work. Is this a truth? What fiendish brain could contrive a mechanical device to do the work by which the poor earn their bread? But this is an aside. If you can procure some Wilton carpet, I too, would like a small piece, say fifteen by thirty feet, and a light color. Also bring your pewter. But most important of all, bring plenty of nails.

Another matter: in our first Assembly here, although the laws we drew are not effective but were substituted by others sent by Cecilius with his new secretary and dear friend, John Lewger — also a convert to our faith — which others the freemen have rejected so that we still live by the common laws of England; yet, the sentiment still prevails which was written into the form of law by our first Assembly that no spinster in this province shall hold land more than seven years. Now, naturally, I have no intimation of what the future may hold for you both, nor should I presume any discussion at this distance of my own hopes, but I suggest you ask Cecilius for a piece of writing requesting me to give you a patent in your own names to have and to hold forever; the same considerations, in fact, as though you were in truth Gentlemen Adventurers.

You will find no want here for fish or game, berries or fruits. We are abundantly provided by a kind Providence, but you will, of course, know all of this if you have read Father White's "Relation," and you will have read it, I am sure, unless your Latin has grown rusty. The good Father is now composing a grammar in the Indian dialect so that he may translate the Scriptures for them, thus making Holy Writ as available to them for their reading and edification as it has ever been to us.

With every prayer that this epistle will safely reach you; that it will inspire you at last to come among us; that if you do you will here know length of days and peace; and with my humble respects to His Lordship, Sir Richard, my kind remembrances to all the young ladies at Larke Stoke, not forgetting the appealing little

*Anne, and to your worthy brothers, as well, I remain always yours
to command,*

*Your humble and obedient servant,
Richard Calvert.*

Two

MARGARET BRENT of Larke Stoke had re-read at least a dozen times the letter from Leonard Calvert, Lieutenant Governor of Maryland, where he ministered the affairs of his brother Cecilius, Second Lord Baltimore and holder of the charter. Two readings had been enough for her sister Mary.

It was not that Mary Brent was unsympathetic with the Lord Baltimore's Maryland venture, but she was a timid soul and shrank from what she had long known to be inevitable — that eventually Margaret, an adventurer at heart, would wish to migrate to the Catholic colony in the New World! These sisters were inseparable; Margaret was the dominant character of the two. Mary loved her dearly.

Today was the Feast of the Annunciation, New Year's Day, March 25, 1638, and with the assistance of Mary Lea, her old nurse, Margaret was dressing for dinner. In contrast with other years, when all the family were in residence at Admington Manor, before its sequestration and before the Brent family had been broken up, this year of 1638 loomed as either momentous or horribly lonely.

"It does the soul no benefit to ruminate, Miss Margaret," observed Lea in her high-pitched, thin voice.

Margaret smiled half-heartedly. "With the future such a question and the past such a hodge-podge," she sighed, "rumination can scarce be avoided."

There was a knock at the door which Lea answered.

"Not dressed yet?" asked Mary Brent as she entered.

"I have no heart for this day," Margaret replied. "I wish I were ill and could remain in bed."

"I know," sympathized her sister, "we are so conscious on these

occasions of how sadly our family has dwindled. "Hurry on," she suggested, "and perhaps we may have time for a walk before dinner. It is fresh air you need. I'll go and sit with papa until you are ready."

"Always so thoughtful," said Margaret, her eyes speaking her love for Mary, "while I am always the selfish, heedless one. Papa needs all of us about him today. When one is old . . ."

"Never mind that," advised Mary, giving Margaret an affectionate kiss which was designed to deny that she was thoughtless and selfish. "Make haste now."

But her sister's cheerfulness could not dispel her pensive mood. As Mary left the room Margaret mechanically stepped into the silver lace petticoat which Lea patiently held out for her.

"You do not think my Holland tufted one might be better, Lea?" she asked absently.

"With your magenta velvet gown? Oh, no, Miss Margaret, 'twould give too much to your little figure. 'Tis tall, slim and regal my mistress must be this day."

Margaret could have laughed then.

Tall? She was only a little over five feet. Slim? She was actually thin. Regal? Well — perhaps.

She was the daughter of Sir Richard Brent, Lord of Stoke and Admington, descendant of Odo de Brent whose land holdings under the abbots of Glastonbury were recorded in the Domesday Book. And her mother, Elizabeth Reed, who only last Michaelmas had been laid to rest in St. Mary's Churchyard of Illmington parish had descended from Edward III, tracing her ancestry back to John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, Chaucer's patron, and Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester.

"Good old Lea," Margaret smiled, "you know I am really able to dress myself!"

But she slipped into the sleeveless waistcoat which Lea held for her. This, like the petticoat, was made of silver lace, but was laid over the richly colored velvet. Lastly came the gown. This failed to meet down the front by several inches, leaving the gorgeous petticoat and waistcoat exposed to view. The sleeves were long and full, gathered at the wrist by a snug cuff which was edged with needlepoint. Next came her neckerchief likewise edged; and

then she sat on her bed while Mary fitted her small silver slippers winding their long magenta ribbons about her slim ankles.

"There," said Lea when she had finished. Having reached the brittle, rheumatic age she cautiously rose to her feet. "You are a picture, little mistress, except, except . . ."

"No, Lea," said Margaret emphatically, reading the question in the old woman's eye, "no cap, *ever*!"

Poor Lea, Margaret thought to herself. In the dim past she had had a tragic accident resulting in a serious burn which had taken most of her hair and fearfully discolored one side of her face. Lea *had* to wear a cap.

The old woman sighed as she began to pick up stray bits of clothing and the morning gown so recently discarded by her mistress.

"Mistress Mary does not mind the cap," she muttered reproachfully, "and she is but one year younger than yourself."

Margaret made no comment. Lea's complaint made her cross. She would not confine her titian hair beneath the conventional headdress prescribed for ladies of her station after they had passed the age of twenty-one. And Margaret did not need Lea to remind her she had passed that milestone sixteen years previously.

Biting and pressing her lips together to bring the color into them, Margaret arranged her hair to her satisfaction.

Lea stood by, ready with her coat.

"You are going for the walk?" she asked.

"Indeed I am," Margaret replied. As she let Lea help her on with the heavy mohair wrap, she said, "Why is it, Lea, there is so much time to do what I do not want to do?"

"And what do you want to do, Miss Margaret, if you could?"

Margaret looked at her old nurse seriously for a moment. Then in a low, firm voice, which rang with repression and bitterness she said, tersely, "I want to be free, Lea. I want the freedom to live my own life, myself!"

Mary was waiting in the lower hall.

"Is papa napping?" asked Margaret as she came down the broad stairway.

"No. Fulke and Giles are with him and they are talking about

Maryland. Let us join them for a moment."

Sir Richard was seated in his favorite Venetian folding chair, an heirloom and treasure rescued from Admington Manor. His feet rested on a cricket. An afghan was spread over his lap. Sir Richard suffered much from gout. His two sons stood before him on the broad hearth. Six foot logs crackled behind them, sending warmth and cheer into the dark, oak panelled room.

"Another year and things will be different here," Giles was saying as his sisters entered. "Fulke and I will raise enough tobacco in Maryland to buy back Admington."

"Egad!" exclaimed the old gentleman. "Under God why should I have to buy back my own manor? And you stand there to taunt your ageing father! You gave me the same promise in '25. And did you keep it, sir? Did you? You did not!" Sir Richard banged his fist on the arm of his chair. "You came crawling back from Virginia, whipped by the same lash that sent you thither!"

Giles flushed crimson and visibly controlled his temper while Fulke reminded his father that Maryland, because it was a religious sanctuary, would spell another story.

"Bah!" roared Sir Richard, in agitation rumpling his white hair, which he no longer imprisoned under a wig, "my Lord Baltimore, Cecilius Calvert, will take care that you do not grow too rich in his Province. Do not be the fool, sir, to suppose that he offers sanctuary, as he calls it, to those of our faith without also exacting a reward as oppressive as our English fines!"

"Papa!" exclaimed Margaret impulsively, "you do our friends the Calverts grave injustice. We know, dear, how you resent them but we do not know why."

"If you know that much, why do you mention them?" demanded Sir Richard refusing to yield to Margaret's tender approach.

"Indeed, sir," put in Fulke, usually silent and retiring, "who can mention Maryland and omit the Calverts?"

"I can," snapped the old gentleman, "and I expect you all to follow my example."

"You are unreasonable!" stormed Margaret. "You ask the impossible!" The ire of her voice matched that of her father.

"You shamefully betray your jealousy of good people, sir," said Giles, his patience gone completely.

"Jealousy!" roared Sir Richard. "Mary, where are you? Do you hear your own brother? Jealousy he says. I, Richard Brent, Catholic born, by the grace of God, am jealous of a handful of avaricious converts who more than I, enjoy the favor of the King. Egad! It turns my stomach."

"Oh, papa," begged Margaret, her own temper now under control, though her voice carried a tone of exasperation, "you work yourself up so over the Calverts: you resent the favor they have received. Think you God, Himself, has not bestowed far more favor upon you? Why so envious, papa?"

"Favor, favor?" asked Sir Richard. "Explain yourself, daughter."

"Most important is that God gave you our Holy Faith at birth," said Margaret. "Sir George Calvert had to search for it when he was grown to manhood. More than this, all your children are spared to you; Sir George has lost many, and their mother too, by tragic shipwreck."

Sir Richard sighed, and wearily nodded his head. Margaret's catalogue of his blessings was true enough, but it did not seem to cheer him. "I presume," he said, "no matter what paths you choose, your lives, like mine, will be a slow martyrdom as long as you remain faithful to Our Lord and His Holy Church. I wanted to give you all to God, but no, the will of some of you was stronger than mine own. I will not long be with you now, I have no right to hold you to me," he looked about at them all, his eyes finally resting on Margaret's titian head. "God bless you all," he said slowly, as if in benediction. "You are my dearest possessions. Do as you wish. See that you never fail God, and I shall rest content."

No one spoke as he paused.

"Of all now absent from us it is William for whom I long the most. He suffers now because of my selfish will; through my fault. What I have done, my children, I cannot undo, — may God pity me. Too long have I held fast to your God-given heritage, your own free will. My selfish heart now — gives — it — back — ."

His voice trailed off, as though his conscience, at last releasing an unbearable load, would now give him rest. Mary tucked a

shawl about his shoulders and pulled the afghan up over his chest. Then Sir Richard relaxed in the immense luxury of a morning nap which even the English penal laws could not deny him.

“Poor papa,” said Margaret, sadly, as she and Mary stole quietly out of doors. They stood for a moment in the courtyard breathing deeply of the sharp, chill air. They walked on until they reached the banks of the Severn River before either of them spoke again.

William, their brother, had been the first to leave the family roof. Shortly after King Charles I ascended the throne, the Earl of Warwick, as a compliment to their father’s peerage status, had come in person to collect Sir Richard Brent’s long overdue fines for recusancy. These accrued at the rate of three hundred pounds sterling per lunar month plus penalties for delinquency. At that time, pending Sir Richard’s payment of them, William had been jailed as a hostage.

When he was free, Sir Richard had sent him to St. Omer’s in France, but towards the end of 1632 William had left the Jesuit school and returned to Larke Stoke. He told his father he was determined to become a barrister, and eventually marry. He had no vocation for the priesthood.

Sir Richard had been enraged. To placate him, William prepared a scholarly treatise entitled “A discourse upon the nature of eternity and the condition of a separated soul according to the grounds of reasons and principles of Christian Religion.” But having written it William was not content. He dared to publish it. So now, on this New Year’s day in 1638 he marked his fifth year in the Gatehouse at Westminster.

Jane Brent had been the first of Sir Richard’s and Lady Elizabeth’s daughters to escape her father’s indomitable will. She had gone to Italy to marry her beloved Frank Cassidy under the vaulted dome of St. Peter’s, and now lived in Paris.

By various devices Giles had escaped tutelage for the religious life; Fulke had married clandestinely, Richard was indispensable at Larke Stoke. Only the two remaining sons, Edward and George, and two daughters, Catherine and Eleanor, submitted to their father’s wishes. The boys were now at St. Omer’s and the girls with the Augustinians at Bruges. Elizabeth, another

daughter, had assumed the household responsibilities at Larke Stoke since her mother's death, and Anne, the youngest child remained at home. Sir Richard realized long ago that Margaret and Mary were inseparable, and because of a tragedy in her early youth he would not force Margaret against her will. So Margaret and Mary also remained at home.

But home was not as it had been years ago. In 1638 the Brent fortunes had almost vanished because they were constantly drained by the recusancy fines. Two thirds of their lands were confiscated and Admington Manor, as well. Larke Stoke was much smaller than the old manor, and Sir Richard invariably referred to it as his "miserable little hut." In Maryland, Fulke and Giles hoped to realize enough wealth from tobacco to enable their father to buy back his lands and the manor.

They had reached the river's edge now, and the sisters seated themselves on one of the few white stone benches.

"I can scarcely believe it," said Margaret, "but the import of papa's words has not escaped you, Mary?"

"No, dear," replied Mary. "There can be no doubt. We are free to do as we like."

Margaret felt there was a lack of enthusiasm in Mary's voice. It was some few moments before she spoke again, then turning impulsively she put her hand on Mary's arm. "Darling — let — Oh, you know what I want. Let us go ourselves this year. To Maryland!"

At last it had come. Now Mary must give the answer she had considered times without number. A gust of wind stirred the dead leaves at their feet. Margaret took a deep breath.

"Come," she said, shivering a little, "it is too cold to sit still here. Come, we will walk."

Mary joined her. Margaret set the pace: slow, deliberate.

"We grow no younger, you and I," she began and paused to look intently at her beloved sister. Margaret knew she could never leave England without her. "We are old, unwanted women," she observed, "what have we given to the world?"

"Given!" exclaimed Mary. "We are forever trying to keep what we have."

"I feel young enough to begin again," Margaret went on, ignoring Mary's response. "Thirty-seven is not really old. I do so want to get away from this stifling country where we dare not call our souls our own. Nor can we order our pleasures or plans beyond the stuffy confines prescribed for English gentlewomen!"

"Margaret!" remonstrated Mary.

"Are you too old to change?" challenged her sister.

"I am younger than you," teased Mary, "and I want to live, too, but not necessarily in danger. The truth is I feel as young as our little sister Anne. . . ."

"You do not act it," cut in Margaret.

"But seriously," Mary went on, "Maryland is so far, and the Indians are much more vicious than His Majesty's spies in Gloucestershire."

"Maryland will not be any nearer when you are sixty," observed Margaret, dryly.

"But the Indians! You remember the Virginia massacre Giles tells us about?"

"That was some twenty-five years ago, and in Virginia," objected Margaret. "In Maryland it is different. The natives are friendly. Leonard has written so. He said the squaws have taught our women how to make pone and omine, and the braves are always bringing gifts, hides, pelts, venison and such like."

"All friendly, eh?" Mary looked at Margaret reproachfully. "Then why did Leonard import a whitesmith from Virginia?" she asked pointedly. "What does a whitesmith do? He keeps arms and ordnances in good order, ready for instant use."

"Of course," replied Margaret, "the Marylanders are great hunters and there is plenty of game."

Realizing the Indians would not deter Margaret, Mary attacked another obstacle which terrified her almost as much as the former. But in her heart she knew she was fencing a losing duel.

"The ocean," she objected now, "the great Atlantic ocean — such a vast expanse of water. I can never forget how close Giles came to shipwreck when he returned from Virginia."

"The Indians and the ocean will always *be*," said Margaret scornfully, "unless by some magic both can be obliterated. Other

women have gone to Maryland; hundreds have crossed the Atlantic ocean and risked the Indians. . . .

"But they've had husbands to protect them," insisted Mary.

Margaret pressed her lips tightly together and her face clouded.

"Not that we want husbands — or really need them," said Mary, rushing the words out in a tumble for she realized that all unconsciously she had probed Margaret's old wound.

"I have never read," said her sister stiffly, "that Adventurers must always be of the sterner sex. I, myself, have no fears. I want to go to Maryland. Now that Papa has spoken — releasing us — I want to go very much — as much as I would want a — a vocation! In a way Maryland would be a vocation. Oh, Mary," she added, searching her sister's eyes, "let us please tell Giles and Fulke we will go with them."

"How charmed they will be to have two spinsters on their hands. We will probably be very sick on the ocean," Mary warned good naturedly. As she spoke, she pulled her wrap more closely about her shoulders and tucked it in her neck. The March wind held a greater chill than she had expected, and more than this, the gesture was one of herself making final resistance to a fearsome sacrifice.

"A little seasickness," Margaret was saying, "would be good riddance to England."

Mary paid no attention to this. She knew Margaret loved England with the loyalty that is infused at birth in every English heart.

The two sisters complemented each other. Mary was generally loved; Margaret only by the few who knew her well, and sometimes even these approached her with caution. Her heart was often lonely for tenderness and friendship. She was the epitome of frankness. She despised subterfuge and insincerity and usually "spoke her mind" regardless of where the sparks might fly. As a consequence most people were timid about discussing even the weather with her. Mary, on the other hand, was careful and conciliatory, permitting others to indulge their little whims and fancies without comment. Margaret was generally motivated by impulse; Mary always deliberate, never knew the many moments of tormenting regret which often harassed her impulsive sister.

Margaret could never forget the background of her own life, nor

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that of her ancestors, which was religious persecution. She could not forget, for instance, that during the long reign of Her Late Majesty another bold and loyally Catholic Brent had swung at Tyburn. Nor could she ever forget her own tragedy. But in spite of these bitter memories the zealous Margaret would have given her own life to bring one soul to the Catholic Faith. It took her a lifetime to learn that this can only be done by self-abnegation and example.

Mary almost knew the penal laws by heart. England had been full of informers whose reward was one third of confiscated lands; or, worse, their victims were commanded by Royal Writ for whatever service the conformist spies might demand. Mary's ever recurring nightmare was that she was the scullery maid in a Puritan's kitchen. It was a very bad dream.

Perhaps, her observation of Margaret was accountable for Mary's timidity. Twenty years should be time enough to heal a wound, but the scar tissue was thin and easily broken. It began the summer Margaret was seventeen. She had begun to worry because as yet no one had come to claim her; at least not one to her liking. And then — then with the swiftness of a mid-summer shower he had come riding up to Admington Manor to see her father on a matter of property.

Then, oh glorious day, love with all its golden fire and mellow tenderness flooded her days and caressed her nights, hermetically sealing them both in a world of bliss and happiness which only their forthcoming wedding would pierce to usher them into a greater happiness. And then how rudely it was shattered. Because he had consulted a Jesuit about his wedding plans, he was thrown into the Tower.

The seal was broken and the outside world into which Margaret was hurled was one of endless heartache. For ten long years her love languished in the Tower, cold, hungry and ill: no word or gift from his beloved Margaret being allowed to reach him. At last the hand of God released him. Because he had given "no trouble" his distinguished family was allowed to bury him. It was ten long years since Margaret had stood beside his open grave. In her memory it had never closed.

Through these years Mary had been her sister's only confidant.

She had lived each tragic moment with her. She had seen this memory, year by year, sear her sister's very soul, masking the gentle tenderness she knew to be there with a brittle bitterness which altered her whole personality. Only since Cecilius Calvert had acquired the charter for Maryland, had Mary begun to think perhaps time at last had done its healing work; for from the first talk of Maryland, Margaret had shown a new hope and interest in life, the old bitterness leaving her eyes and tongue.

Her reflections were shattered now, as she heard Margaret say, "Since we are beginning a new year, it is but fit we do something new to match. I want to create a home, Mary, and to be remembered for something I have done, not just as a daughter of the English peerage. Cecilius Calvert is building Maryland — I want to build, too."

For answer Mary put her arm about her sister. "I know," she said, "all real people feel that way. The trouble is so many always think they must go miles away from those they know and love to accomplish anything worthwhile. But I do understand, dear."

"What have we to lose by leaving England?" Margaret challenged. "We will have God's same sky, the same wind and weather, the same waters, the same trees. . . ."

"The same family?" interrupted Mary.

"A portion of it, yes," responded Margaret, "and the others forever enshrined in our hearts."

"But unseen. That will be hard."

"Of course. But what else will we miss?"

"Larke Stoke."

"That 'miserable little hut,'" Margaret smiled reminiscently, "but think how we may build!" she added, looking eagerly at her sister. "A little house, Mary, with a low roof and sweet little windows, and cupboards and shelves wherever we need them, and — why in Maryland we can even have a wee altar in our home — and openly — no need there for secret panels and hiding holes. How often have I dreamed of this!"

"Not so fast," cautioned Mary. "You forget Giles. Don't you suppose he would want us to live with him? Even insist upon it. For all your fine spirit and daring, dear, you are a woman. Giles will feel responsible; obliged to protect us."

"Bother Giles and protection! You know I wouldn't live with Giles. It is almost impossible even here! Giles!"

Mary laughed. The friendly animosity between Margaret, the idealist, and Giles whose ambitions were closely related with the goods of this world, gave the family constant amusement.

"We go to Maryland for peace and independence," Margaret continued seriously. "We will no longer be mousy little sisters. Giles goes for different reasons. He seeks a fortune in tobacco. If he finds it he will probably never keep it. You know Giles. I've heard nothing from him but tobacco, tobacco, tobacco!"

"And for the best of motives," reproved Mary, "to help papa pay his fines here. Remember his excitement," she went on, "the day he discovered it was in the very next county, Wiltshire, that Sir Walter Raleigh introduced it to England when he was a guest of Sir Walter Long at Wraxall Hall?"

"How could I forget it?" replied Margaret. "It is good enough for money, I reckon. We will raise it, too. But God forbid we shall also worship it. Have you tried smoking the weed, Mary?"

"Once, in secret," admitted Mary, blushing.

"Um! So did I," confessed Margaret, "and I cannot abide it. The taste is so biting, and I could scream and squirm when those Amesbury clay pipes squeak against my teeth."

"Maybe Giles will find a wife in Maryland," suggested Mary, changing the subject.

"No doubt with his genius for efficiency he will find one with a tobacco crop ready to harvest."

"And Fulke . . . ?"

"Fulke knows he can only play adventurer. You know, as well as I, he can do no more than plant a plantation there which will yield him an income." Margaret went on, her face clouding for an instant, "I fear Fulke will become Lord of Stoke and Admington sooner than we realize."

Mary sighed.

"Then at long last," she said, "our sister-in-law Cecilia will be mistress of Larke Stoke, the Lady Brent!"

"I shall never understand how our own dear papa could refuse his roof to Fulke's wife and his own grandchildren," said Margaret.

Realizing that she was unacceptable to Sir Richard, Cecilia had

kept herself well aloof from all the family, living a lonely wedded life at the edge of Larke Stoke in Reed cottage, where Fulke daily visited her. Cecilia had never crossed the threshold of the manor house.

The sisters changed their course and began to retrace their steps. By now the family would be assembling for dinner; on this festival day Sir Richard would expect all to be prompt.

But as they went on Margaret reverted to her uppermost thoughts. "I am sure Maryland must be a little like 'Utopia,'" she said. "Oh, Mary, my darling, my sweet, please, please, say *you* will go. I could not go without you; and I do so much want"

"If it were not so far: if it were more settled," Mary protested. "I *am* afraid of the Indians, Margaret, no matter what you say. I am afraid of the unknown. Here things are uncertain enough — but within a certain scope we know what to anticipate. In Maryland"

Her voice trailed off. What was the use? Now she must give her decision. She had made it long ago. Now she had but to give it voice. That was the difficulty. Above all else and far more than her own, she yearned for Margaret's happiness. For this she was willing to pay any price short of apostasy.

So now, at long last, as though the spoken consent cost her nothing, she linked her arm in Margaret's, looked mischievously into her pensive face, and with a sly wink, she said, with deliberate carelessness, "All right, we will go!"

Sudden tears blinded Margaret's eyes and splashed down her cheeks as she placed her hands on Mary's shoulders holding her at arm's length and searching her face.

"Darling! Oh, my precious, darling Mary!"

She hugged her sister mercilessly.

"My sweet, sweet one," she went on, stopping to kiss Mary over and over again. "How I have longed to hear you say just that: 'We will go!' Oh, God bless you and bless you, and bless you, and the Mother of God caress you!"

"Good gracious!" cried Mary, wrenching herself free from imminent suffocation. "Why, dearest, I'd no idea — no idea you wanted it so much. Why didn't you tell me?" Already Mary felt repaid for the sacrifice consent had meant to her.

"I've wanted it more than anything in the world," she heard Margaret say in a voice which seemed to have a new softness.

They slowed their pace. Margaret did not want to lose this joyous moment. Somehow, even through her inner joy, she had a presentiment that this might be the very happiest moment of her Maryland experiences. Would realization match her long anticipation?

Mary seemed to sense this too, for presently she warned ever so gently, "Do not expect Utopia. It is impossible. You know it is. . . ."

". . . the land of Nowhere," Margaret took her up with a happy flourish.

"Freedom of conscience does not guarantee Utopia," warned Mary. "So many people abuse freedom when they have it — like undisciplined children."

"Come, come," protested Margaret pleadingly, "this is not the moment for philosophy."

"I only want to spare you," persisted Mary, "try not to ride too hard to what may be a bad fall."

"Like Adam?" parried Margaret.

For answer Mary looked at her with an expression of mild reproach.

"All of Leonard's letters make it *sound* like Utopia," defended Margaret.

"Our good friend Leonard Calvert is the Lieutenant General and Governor of the Maryland Province," responded Mary with cool deliberation. "No doubt, for friendship's sake he would like all the Brents to migrate. But part of his responsibility, in fact his duty, is to write such glowing accounts of the colony as to induce, even coerce, others to go out."

"I hardly think Leonard would mislead *us*," objected Margaret with pointed emphasis. "We have always found him trustworthy."

Mary smiled to herself. Leonard Calvert was six years Margaret's junior, yet of all the Brent sisters he had usually shown a preference for her company. A preference which Margaret, herself, had never noticed.

"I really think," said Mary now, "that many people have read Sir Thomas More too seriously."

"Including the Calverts and Margaret Brent?"

"Perhaps," admitted Mary. "Those who read *Utopia* should remember Master More wrote a satire."

By now they were quite near the house, and looking towards it, they saw the steward Tidd coming across the dull brown lawns in company with little Anne, who skipped and ran with the abandon of childhood.

"Do you suppose father would let us take Tidd to Maryland?" Margaret said to Mary.

"We could ask," agreed Mary, "and what about Lea? We will have to take her, Margaret, old as she is. She would die if we forsook her."

But both sisters were watching Anne, and felt a tug at their heart-strings. It would be hard to part from her. What kind of home could one build without a child in it?

"His Lordship," advised Tidd respectfully, "sends word that dinner will be served shortly."

"Thank you, Tidd," acknowledged Mary, "we are coming."

"Tidd," called Margaret as the steward turned away, "would you like to go to Maryland?"

Tidd's face broke into a happy smile.

"That I would, Mistress Margaret, that I would, mam!"

"Come, we must hurry," urged Mary. "It will be wild boat's head today."

"And we are going to use those peculiar things Jane sent from Italy."

"You mean the forks?"

"Yes," admitted Margaret, her eyes glinting in anticipation of much amusement, "however do you suppose we will be able to eat with such things?"

"Where is your adventurer's spirit?" laughed Mary. "Maryland will hold stranger things than those foolish forks."

"Never fear, Mary. We will become accustomed to new things in the new world, and learn to love them, too."

Three

IT seemed to Mary as each busy month followed its predecessor that, even as a carefree child, she had never known Margaret to be so happy. Absorbed day and night with plans for the great adventure, she seemed to drop a year with each new dawn. The high spirit of her youth returned; the small lines of discontent which had begun to etch themselves faintly about her eyes and mouth vanished. Each word she spoke had a new animation. Margaret went about Larke Stoke singing and humming to herself, a habit which carried Mary back to those few completely happy weeks when her sister knew the joyful abandon of loving and being loved by another. More than all of this, though she had never known such busy days, Margaret was putting on weight. While the sisters prepared for the coming journey, Lea's fingers flew over Margaret's wardrobe, making alterations, letting out seams, making new gowns.

June was half over when Giles suggested their preparations had advanced far enough to make it feasible to secure passage to America. It would probably require three months more or less to make satisfactory arrangements. He suggested he had best go to London and consult with William Peaseley. Fulke would remain at Larke Stoke to be near his wife and children as long as possible.

From the first Margaret had insisted she wanted to visit Cecilius Calvert, not only for farewell, but to obtain, herself, the coveted piece of writing regarding the property she and Mary would acquire in Maryland. So it was planned that Giles would escort his sisters to Wardour Castle, go on to London, and returning, accompany them back to Larke Stoke. As the crow flies, Larke Stoke and Wardour were some sixty miles apart; the trip could be made with

leisurely comfort in a little less than a week: but it was longer than this before the three rode into Wardour Park.

Margaret conceived the notion of visiting about the country-side. So many friends had not been seen for years, and now with Maryland in the offing, how many years would it be before another opportunity would arise?

As they proceeded on their roundabout way to Wardour, they were astonished by the evidences of freedom which adherents to the old religion were beginning to enjoy. More than once Mary found herself ardently praying Margaret would reconsider; would give up the Maryland venture to remain safely in England. But she knew these would be fruitless prayers, for adventure was in Margaret's blood and had been frustrated for decades.

Rumor had come to them that their father's old friend the Marquess of Worcester, Lord of Raglan Castle in Monmouthshire, now openly supported the ancient faith and Mass was offered in his private chapel. The Brents could not believe this; and although Raglan was far off the direct route to Wardour in Wiltshire, they determined to investigate. They arrived on the Feast of the Ascension, and for the first time in many years, brother and sisters knelt at an altar rail, in a consecrated chapel and openly received Holy Communion from the hands of a Roman Catholic priest. The experience deeply stirred their hungry souls. And like children who have been harshly disciplined, and then swiftly forgiven, it curiously filled them with a nostalgia for old England. Margaret almost wavered; but a comment of their host deterred her.

"Her Majesty is our protection," he said, at their departure, as he stood in the mild June sun which flooded the courtyard of Raglan, "but we cah hardly place our full confidence in the Court nor derive therefrom an inspiration to hope all is over."

"I presume not," Giles observed, "yet you tell us Lord Winchester's chaplains come and go from Basing House in Hampshire, unmolested."

"True, my son," replied the Marquess, "and it is fashionable in London to assist at Mass in the Queen's private chapel, St. James. The King has also opened a chapel at Somerset House, and too, at Woodstock which is Her Majesty's favorite country place."

"Anne, our Lady Baltimore," Margaret added, "only last Mi-

chaelmas, told us His Majesty's every thought is centered in Henrietta Maria. He finds her irresistible and she can influence him in everything."

"But do not forget," admonished their host, "the Queen refused to be crowned by a prelate of the Established Church, nor would she attend the coronation of her spouse. Our countrymen resent this. And while it is true her Majesty has found friends among the Catholic peerage — the Arundells especially whom she so graciously favors — yet she remains aloof from her adopted people. They know her as French and Catholic: she is not popular. Her Majesty has shared the rule of this realm for now almost eight years," the Marquess continued. "It has taken her thus long to bring about a toleration of her co-religionists: yet should she pass from this life tonight"

"Oh, God forbid!" exclaimed Mary.

"Precisely," endorsed his Lordship, "but upon such a slender thread, my dear lady, hangs our apparent freedom."

Leaving Raglan Castle, the Brents headed southwest, passing Tintern Abbey about mid-day and pushing on to Chepstow on the Wye River. Here they paused for the night, securing comfortable lodgings at an inn. The next morning they followed the Wye to its junction with the Severn at Porthkewett where they ferried over to Tytherington. By evening of the second day after their departure from Raglan they reached Almondsbury. The following morning promised a warm, humid day, and it was Margaret's suggestion that they rest here until noon, and then go on to Bristol.

Riding through the open country, Mary and herself conventionally garbed in their riding habits of heavy serge, had been tiring due to the merciless heat of the June sun. It would be less exhausting for themselves and their horses, Margaret said, if they took the journey in easier stages. So they filled three days following the River Avon from Bristol to Bath. Their next stop-over, after leaving Bath, was Westbury. Then, being so near Wardour, they urged their mounts and themselves to reach Tisbury in a day.

The sun had already set when at last the Brents sighted their main objective, Wardour Castle. From the plains north of Tisbury

they saw, rising from the Vale of Wardour, the two impressive towers of the fourteenth century castle which was set in a densely wooded park.

This was the seat of Lord Arundell, descendant of Thomas Plantagenet and an old Norman family of Cornwall which had always been strongly Catholic. Lord Arundell was called "The Valiant"; and had been imprisoned by Her Late Majesty for refusing to attend Protestant services, but her successor, James I, had created him first Lord Arundell of Wardour. He had been the one friend of George Calvert who most strongly influenced the latter's conversion to the ancient faith, and the largest investor in his Avalon venture. He was also father-in-law to Cecilius, second Lord Baltimore, who married Anne Arundell in 1620 when she was just fourteen.

Cecilius had so impoverished himself by his Maryland venture, which had the full support of his father-in-law and his wife, that now, for some time past, he and his family had lived on the Wardour estate at Hooker House which Lord Arundell deeded to his daughter.

It was almost dusk when at last the weary Brents arrived at this destination. They were sorely disappointed when the housekeeper at Hooker House informed them Her Ladyship was at Woodstock visiting the Queen, and His Lordship had gone up to London on urgent business. In the absence of Lord and Lady Baltimore the Brents were disinclined to accept the hospitality of their home which was graciously extended by the housekeeper, and turning their mounts south again, wearily covered the additional three miles to Wardour Castle, itself.

Here Lord Arundell and his daughter-in-law, Lady Blanche, gave them a most cordial welcome; and here Margaret and Mary remained guests, awaiting the return of Cecilius. After a few days relaxation, Giles went on to London.

The sisters had visited Wardour only once before, at the time of the marriage of Anne Arundell and Cecilius Calvert, but the memory of this visit had always held a fascination for them. Like Admington Manor and Larke Stoke, Wardour was built of native stone. It was set in the depths of a heavily wooded park. Now, in July, the dense, lush foliage caressed the top of the twenty-foot

hexagonal wall which enclosed the open stone courtyard at the main entrance. The architecture throughout was inconsistent, due to the interruption of its building at the time of the Black Death in 1349.

Prior to this great national calamity, the stone mullioned windows had been decorated with elaborate traceries. The ogee or S-shape form, was introduced into all arches which broke the wall arcades. Capital niches were moulded and interior carvings were executed with delicate, intricate detail. But following the Black Death, when construction was resumed and completed, austere, vertical and horizontal lines were emphasized, the luxurious and extravagant curvilinear style giving way to a more practical severity.

And so it came about that the interior walls were decorated by panellings in rectangular divisions. These were generally hidden from view, however, with rich tapestries from Flanders or the many family portraits which had been recently painted by the Hollander, Van Dyck, who enjoyed the patronage of the English Court.

Wardour's furnishings were massive and solid; carved oak predominating, often embellished with tracings or panels of Italian cypress. The stone floors were covered with Fustian or Soumak carpets. But the most exquisite floor covering was a large cut pile carpet laid in the great entrance hall. It displayed a repeating pattern in monotone reds of star devices of Moorish influence. On one edge of the border, facing all who entered, there was woven in bright yellows, the inscription: "Feare God and Keepe His Commandments made in the yeare 1607." In the center field, also yellow, was woven Lord Arundell's coat of arms impaling those of his second wife Anne, daughter of Sir Miles Philipson, who, now in 1638 had been dead almost a decade.

Margaret and Mary enjoyed the hospitality of Wardour for almost a month. Lady Blanche, wife of Lord Arundell's son Thomas, had proved herself a gracious hostess and charming gentlewoman. She was the sixth daughter of the Marquess of Worcester, and naturally at once had a common interest with the Brent sisters who were so recently guests of her father at Raglan Castle.

Late in the evening of August first, Cecilius returned to Hooker House, and aware of the presence of the Brent sisters at the castle

through Giles whom he had met in London, he sent them a cordial greeting and promised he would meet them next morning in the library at Wardour.

If posterity's historians should hazard the notion that the Calverts read More's *Utopia* with more than passing interest and amusement they might be right, for when Margaret and Mary were ushered into the library the first object to attract their attention was a copy of this satirical work lying open on Cecilius' great table.

Though by 1638 a translation of *Utopia* had been made in the vernacular, this edition which Margaret now held was in the original Latin, and as she puckered her brow over syntax and construction she realized, as Leonard had hinted, that in truth her Latin was rusty. Nevertheless, she smiled as first the irony and then the wit of the text became apparent.

"Hum," she mused, "fantasy versus fact. And what a bite and sting Master More has in his words!"

Although on a previous visit Mary had inspected it carefully, she was again absorbed by the famous Glastonbury cup which she now held in her small hands, examining it in the light from the windows as though it were something she wanted to be sure to remember in detail. The legend of the Glastonbury thorn had always caught her fancy.

"You know," Margaret's voice interrupted her absorption, "there's more of a connection here than you seem to realize. Have you ever considered who George Calvert, Cecilius' father, chose as his spiritual adviser after he became a Catholic? And who is a constant visitor here at Wardour since Cecilius and Anne have been in residence?"

"No," said Mary, still turning the famous relic in her hands, "who?"

"The famous Jesuit, Father Henry More."

"You mean the grandson of Sir Thomas More?"

"The same," replied Margaret. "They probably discuss the practical suggestions in this work over and over," she added.

"I have heard," observed Mary newsily, "that Father Henry may become the provincial of the English Jesuits."

"More interesting is my recollection that it was Father More

who helped George Calvert write the charter for his Newfoundland colony. And I believe he also wrote the charter for Maryland which Cecilius once told us he adopted without changing a word or comma."

"Next you will be telling me Father White said the first Mass in Maryland, but I remember reading a Spanish account of the missionary, Father Segura . . ."

"The Spaniards were all in Florida," cut in Margaret.

"Just let me finish," begged Mary. "It was in 1570 or '71 that Father Segura and seven companions were led to the Chesapeake country by a Florida Indian and were martyred there."

"Oh, Mary," exclaimed her sister, "if there had been no savage bloodshed in that story you would not have remembered it."

Mary laughed. Then she said seriously, "I cannot help it, Margaret, the savages do frighten me."

Mary got up now and started walking about the room, her body as restless as her mind.

"The thought that torments me day and night," she said, "is that no sooner shall we be settled in Maryland, and no doubt very happy and free, than the royal trap will spring and then the haven will be a hell!"

"It must be different there," said Margaret, trying to be consoling. "Maryland is a far cry from England," she went on. "We will have a voice in the government through our brothers, of course. We will be more free than here."

"But for how long?" persisted Mary.

Margaret looked at her sister anxiously. Was Mary backing down? Should she offer . . . ? No, no, they must go. Yet if Mary would be unhappy . . .

"The future is uncertain wherever it be spent," she said now, rising and joining Mary at the window where she had paused to gaze into the dense forest which was Wardour Park. "We have given perhaps half our lives to England," she went on. "We must try again. We can come back, Mary, if it does not work. If you want . . ."

"No," said Mary, turning swiftly and putting her arm about her sister, "do not say it, Margaret. I'm sorry. I worry too

much. I had forgotten the most important thing."

Margaret would have questioned her but just then the door opened and their friend Cecilius Calvert came forward to greet them with a hand extended to each.

"A thousand pardons," he apologized, "sorry to keep you waiting. I had to finish this letter from Leonard."

"What is the newest news?" said Margaret.

"Leonard says he cannot send me a lion," chuckled Cecilius.

"Oh!" groaned Mary, and sank into a chair.

"Yes," Cecilius affirmed, laughingly, obviously unmindful of the horrified tone of Mary's "Oh." "Yes, Leonard seems much crestfallen because the lion he had for me got away — no, died, I believe; as well as a redbird, too." Again he laughed heartily.

"Are you now adding a zoo to your sanctuary projects?" asked Margaret.

"Eh?" queried Cecilius. Then changing the subject, "Warm, isn't it?" he said, pausing to run his hand under his jet black shoulder length hair which clung about his neck. "Now, if only I would wear a wig," he went on, "then in weather like this I could remove it for comfort, providing there were no ladies present," he added with a courtly bow to his guests. "But I abominate the wig," he continued, "unsanitary, skull-gripping, sweaty, putrid. My own hair can be washed, though such treatment makes it most unmanageable — so can my beard," he added stroking the latter with affectionate pride. "But then," he concluded facetiously, "perhaps I could pile my hair high on my head as Mary has hers. . . ."

"Look at Margaret's," advised Mary who was now quite composed. She knew the sight would shock him and strangely enjoyed this fact.

"By Jove! I say, Margaret, where the devil is it?" he exclaimed as Margaret proudly and obligingly turned her head to show a closely cropped mass of titian curls.

"In the dust-bin," she advised him carelessly. "I am not, like yourself, disposed to be a slave to convention. I despise hair piled atop my head. I am a little old to have it dangling in my neck as is the fashion with you gentlemen. Now with a swish of the

wrist it is fixed. It is amazing to me that the sterner sex has not come to such freedom. You could wear this arrangement with better grace than I."

"Papa is horrified," advised Mary, "and says it is probably the adventurer spirit overcoming Margaret." She smiled affectionately at her sister, adding, "I think it looks lovely. No one but Margaret could do it and remain charming. See how young it makes her!"

"Most extraordinary, most extraordinary," muttered Cecilius staring intently at Margaret's head. "Most original, most un . . ."

" . . . conventional," finished Margaret. "But I have already stated that. It is comfortable. Now, let us get on."

Cecilius looked up at her, his expression one of concern. "I'm sorry," he apologized. "You have waited long to accomplish your mission here."

There was a pause, then Mary said, "We want a concession."

"That's it," added Margaret, "we must have it from you before we leave England."

Now Cecilius looked at her reproachfully. "Margaret," he began, "I have a liberal charter. Do you ask a special privilege above those I already offer? Do you know my Conditions of Plantation are most generous?"

"Not to spinsters," objected Margaret.

"What do you mean?" asked Cecilius incredulously.

"There is a law. . . ."

"There are no laws in Maryland save the common laws of England," protested Cecilius, a harsh bitterness in his tone. "I sent a code out with John Lewger but my colonists abused their freedom to reject it. Now they have sent me a code of their own devising which they wish me to approve. Strange to relate, their code is almost word for word, clause for clause my own, but foolishly they presume it has originated with them. Self-government I provide them, but I have made no stipulation that I should have no hand in writing their laws! So, Mistress Margaret," he concluded, "whatever you presume to be a law about spinsters, is non-existent."

"But Leonard has given us a different impression," defended Margaret. "He writes that it is the law that a spinster may only hold her land for seven years. Then she must marry."

"I never heard of such a thing," remonstrated Cecilius. "What sort of ridiculous colonial fancy is that? I have never entertained the thought of such a provision. You must have misread Leonard's letter." He paused, furrowing his brow as though trying to recollect something.

"Margaret said it was ridiculous," put in Mary.

"We could depend upon that," replied Cecilius, nodding absently, "and I might say in this instance I am in complete agreement with your sister."

Margaret, meanwhile, had been scanning through Leonard's letter to Mary and herself which she had taken the precaution to bring with her. Now finding the passage which she had sidelined, she handed it to Cecilius. For a moment he gave it his close attention. Then, rising, he went to the booksheves and cupboards which lined the west wall of this room. Opening the door of the center cabinet he revealed a small but palatial interior floored with alternate squares of ebony and ivory and adorned with Corinthian columns, the whole surrounded by mirrors. Beneath this display were several long drawers lined with stamped gold and silver papers. From one of these he brought forth an armful of papers, labeled, "Maryland Assemblies."

"Upon further thought," he said, "it seems now that I do have some recollection of this matter." He spread the papers about in great disorder upon his table as though only in disarray could he be sure to find what he sought. "But I do repeat such a notion never originated with me."

Margaret and Mary were astonished that he so quickly found the document he sought, for in less than a moment, he picked one out and said, "Here is a notation sent me by Father Altham. Perhaps this is what Leonard refers to." He handed the slip of paper to Margaret who read it aloud:

*From Father Altham, S. J. to His Lordship vs an act of assembly:
That it may be prevented that noe woman here vow chastity in*

*be world, unless she marry within seven years after land shall fall
to her, she must either dispose of her land or else she shall forfeit it
to the nexte of kinne, and if she have but one manor, whereas she
cannot alienate it, it is gonue unless she have a husband.*

"That must be it," said Mary when Margaret handed the memo back to Cecilius.

"Let me see that passage of Leonard's letter again," he begged, reaching for it as Margaret readily handed it over to him, indicating the location on the page.

"I see," he muttered more to himself than to the Brent sisters, "Leonard says here 'at the first Assembly.' Umph! So! The last Assembly has run this in again. Blast them! They are a stubborn and persistent lot."

"But at the same time," said Margaret, a note of triumph in her voice now as she took back the letter, "if we are to risk our lives and fortunes in Maryland, Mary and I would like to be free of the further hazard of marriage. We only ask the assurance that our land will remain ours freely to hold forever."

"That is a long time," advised Cecilius. "Things may change in seven years."

"Speaking for myself . . ." began Margaret.

"And for me, too," insisted Mary.

" . . . we expect no change," concluded Margaret.

"Whatever is to be for your happiness," conceded Cecilius in a paternal tone, though he was their junior. "Just tell me what it is precisely that you want me to do."

"Write a letter to Leonard," responded Margaret eagerly, "telling him to give us land with no restraints or restrictions. We'll take four maid servants, and . . ."

"And some nails," put in Mary as though making a mental note.

"Giles and Fulke are taking eighteen," volunteered Margaret.

"Nails?" asked Cecilius as he methodically placed before him a large sheet of paper, and again taking his quill, he said, as he scratched a salutation, "Would you like to dictate your own terms?"

He was playing with them, but Margaret took him seriously and with a triumphant wink at Mary she swooped into dictation.

"Tell him he is to give us — let me see — yes, 'a grant of as much land in and about the town of St. Maries . . . ,'"

Cecilius looked up at her quizzically. Then, smiling inwardly to himself, he meekly put down the words as Margaret uttered them. "St. Maries . . ." he prompted in a moment.

". . . 'and elsewhere,'" Margaret resumed slowly and thoughtfully, "in the province, in as ample a manner and with as large privileges as any of the first Adventurers had.' "

As she finished she looked at Mary, a question in her eyes. Mary smiled approvingly. Neither spoke again until Lord Baltimore, Proprietor of Maryland, had finished writing. "Is that all?" he said then, with mock surprise.

"That will do nicely, I am sure," said Mary primly, "and we thank you kindly."

"It is I who should be thanking you for going out to my colony, as indeed I do," responded Cecilius.

Then he added his signature to the letter and showered the document with sand which he presently shook off, and rolling the sheet, handed it to Margaret with the air of one conferring a distinction. He relaxed then, leaning back in his chair and looked long and thoughtfully from one to the other in his very best House of Lords manner. Margaret handed the letter to Mary.

"Read it, dear," she begged, "so I may hear how it sounds."

"Of course," agreed Mary eagerly.

Cecilius watched them both as the one read and the other listened intently.

Good Brother: —

I would have you pass to Mistress Margaret Brent and to her sister Mistress Mary Brent and their heirs and assignees, for and in respect of four maid servants, besides themselves, which they transported this year to plant in the province of Maryland, a grant of as much land in and about the town of St. Maries and elsewhere in that Province in as ample manner and with as large privileges as any of the first Adventurers have for and in respect to the transportation of five men in the first year of Plantation, reserving only to me and my heirs the like quit rents also which are reserved from the first Adventurers and for so doing this shall be your Warrant. Given under

*my hand and seal at Wardour in the Realm of England, this second
of August, 1638.*

C. Baltimore.

"That is splendid," acknowledged Margaret, when Mary finished.

"And very generous," said Mary, re-rolling the document.

"I have long hoped," said Cecilius, nodding casually, "that my friends and neighbors the Brents would go out to my colony. I would cheerfully offer any inducement within reason," he went on eyeing Margaret particularly. "In Maryland I have intended to establish a colony of free men; free of the penal laws, free in conscience, free to govern themselves, ah — with wise supervision, of course," he added. "It is my firm belief that men of good will even though they be of different faiths, can live together in peace and harmony, aware that the success of their enterprise rests on respect for the other's opinion. My colonists and I are yet subjects of His Majesty, but in truth Maryland is an independency and in this respect differs from all other colonies in America."

Four

IT was mid September before the Brents learned the approximate date of their departure from England. Giles had deputised William Peaseley to secure passage for them. It was about ten days before Michaelmas, when Peaseley dispatched a messenger to Larke Stoke with word that accommodations had been secured on the *Charity*, John Bosworth master. Now lying at Plymouth, she would sail in a fortnight, wind and weather permitting.

This welcome news did not find the four adventuresome Brents unprepared; there were no last minute details, save those of the painful farewells, to harass and delay them. With the exception of Thomas Tidd and Lea, all their twenty-odd servants had gone down to Plymouth the first of the month, accompanying their quantity of cumbersome luggage and their livestock which they intended to land in Maryland. Since their arrival there they had been occupied in accumulating provisions for the voyage itself.

Both girls had tried to persuade their old nurse to remain in Gloucestershire where, they were certain, she was more likely to enjoy length of days than in Maryland. The voyage would be an exhausting undertaking, for Lea was past sixty, half bald, half blind, and her burn-scarred face gave her a sinister appearance which Margaret and Mary knew would cause her great humiliation among strangers. Gently they endeavored to dissuade the old woman, but that loyal soul gave such symptoms of a breaking heart at the prospect of separation from these two who, in truth, had been her absorbing care and interest for more than half her life, that Margaret and Mary did not have the courage to follow their better judgment and insist she remain behind.

Taking leave of their aged father was more difficult than any

of them had anticipated. Not quite so hard for Fulke, perhaps, who left Cecilia and his two children behind and went forth with every intention of returning in a twelvemonth, or at most but six months beyond. But for Margaret and Mary it was a different story. They had asked and received Sir Richard's blessing, but as they set out in the coach which Giles had engaged and had in readiness for some days, their hearts were heavy. As Larke Stoke disappeared from their view, Margaret knew such a wave of nostalgic longing for it, for all the memories it held, even for the sufferings that had been endured there, she felt her heart could not bear this exquisite pain.

'Dear God,' she said under her breath, 'how often I have prayed for this release. Now You have sent it. Does this child of Yours want it? Why am I not transported with joy and boundless happiness? I am so miserable in this moment, I could weep.'

Cautiously Margaret stole a glance at Mary, then quickly looked away. Mary *was* weeping. Only her brothers, deliberately oblivious to Mary's emotion, appeared as composed and nonchalant as though they were merely off for a brief holiday in London. Lea and Tidd rode on the box with the coachman, but Margaret knew, that of them all, these two were enjoying to the full the excitement of anticipation.

The Brents' summer of visiting, from Raglan Castle to Wardour had broadened their knowledge of the present pulse of King Charles' realm.

Now they realized, more fully than was possible within the close confines of Larke Stoke, to what extent Charles I had gone to fill the royal coffers. Others in the realm suffered besides the Roman Catholics. Obviously Charles' ambitions plus the great debt he had inherited from his extravagant father, could not be satisfied by the recusancy fines alone. The wars with France and Spain early in his reign, had increased the national debt alarmingly. Other sources of revenue had had to be tapped. Monopolies for patents for soap, starch, beer and various essentials had been levied. His Majesty had made excessive demands for loans and benevolences: he had imposed crushing fines upon the peerage for not attending him at public functions: his custom dues had adversely

affected the national commerce. But not until the Brents reached Plymouth Hoe did they realize to the full how resentful the lower classes were of these taxes, which had also included the despised ship-money, levied by His Majesty's determination to make England sovereign of the seas, the world's most formidable naval power.

In '34 the first writ for ship-money had been confined to the sea-port towns, but the next year, as Larke Stoke well knew, it had been extended to the whole country, followed by a third writ in '36.

Strangely, this had been one tax which Larke Stoke had paid with a willing heart; but Margaret well understood the same could not be said for the lower classes when she and the others worked their way through the milling crowds on the Hoe. From snatches of talk here and there they gathered that the crowd had assembled to see the *Sovereign* come into port. The Brents had not seen the *Sovereign*, which was launched the year previous, but they had heard enough of her majestic splendor and appalling cost to understand the curiosity and agitation of the populace.

"Such crowds!" exclaimed Mary as she darted a hand to her bonnet which was almost torn from her head as a husky shoulder dragged off one of its long ribbons.

"Beggin' yer pardon, mam!" said the owner of the shoulder, turning to her. Seeing that she was a gentlewoman, he tipped his shabby cap.

"Not meanin' to take your bonnet, milady, though 'is Majesty might fancy such a costly beauty." His tone was bitter.

"It is quite all right," replied Mary, in a flutter as she re-tied the satin ribbons under her chin.

"Why are all these people here?" asked Margaret boldly, as she gathered her skirts closer about her.

"Every last livin' soul of us is 'ere to see His Majesty's golden bubble wot 's took the milk from our children and the clothes from our backs."

"Ah," said Giles with a superior air, "the *Sovereign of the Seas*, eh?"

"The same," said another who had now stopped beside them. This newcomer eyed Giles contemptuously. "To the likes o' you," he snarled, "ship-money is no mor'n a glass o' grog, but

from us 'tis our very life's blood!" It was obvious as the burly fellow menacingly shook a fist in Giles' face, that he had had at least a few pence left to quench his thirst.

"Aside!" ordered Giles, the tone of a military command ringing in his voice, and nodding to Fulke, he made way for his sisters and Lea to pass through the crowd. Fulke brought up the rear, followed by Tidd who looked about him from right to left in bewildered astonishment.

"No yer don't," objected a fishwife whose breath smelt of gin. "Not 'till I tell you an' your fine ladies wot the givernment people 'as done to me with their taxes for fancy ships of gold."

"You want to speak to the gentleman behind the ladies," said Giles, deliberately controlling his voice to make it sound light and off hand, "that one there," he went on, pointing out Fulke. "He has a friend who has a cousin who knows a gentleman of the peerage!"

Fulke's eyes blazed resentment at his brother, but by this device, Giles rescued Margaret and Mary from the grumbling mob.

"Such a fuss over one ship," Margaret complained, now carefully gathering her skirts about her as they descended the stairs from the Hoe. Reaching the waterside, they stepped aboard the shore boat which would take them out to the *Charity*. For the past few days she had been riding at her anchor off shore, having taken on her cargo, livestock and supplies for the voyage at the dockside.

"Those ignorant people should know," said Giles, "that England must be sovereign of the seas: naval power is her best defense."

"Six months ago," put in Mary, "I heard you suggest the *Sovereign* would be too cumbersome for battle."

"And I still hold this to be true," insisted Giles. They were on the water now, being rowed out to the *Charity*.

"In that," put in Fulke who was busily brushing himself off, "you and that fish-wife you baited for me have similar sentiments."

Giles roared with laughter.

"The ruse worked well," he said, "Margaret and Mary are untouched."

"I said from the beginning we would be a care and nuisance to you," offered Mary.

Never before in her thirty-seven years had Margaret come in

such close association with the common people as she had on Plymouth Hoe. The brief encounter was a profound shock. And now aboard the *Charity* in the cabin set aside for the ladies and their personal servants, as she and Mary arranged their limited essentials for the long voyage, Margaret paused.

"You know, Mary, I've learned something — something astonishing."

"Yes," responded Mary as she carefully refolded a Kashmir shawl, "what have you learned?"

"Other people have troubles."

"Of course, silly," said Mary, "what is new to that?"

"I mean those dreadful people on the Hoe. I always thought people like us — you know, Larke Stoke, Catholic gentlemen — but those people have troubles — why considering their state in life, taxation is a far greater burden to them than to us."

Mary stopped her unpacking and looked quizzically at her sister. "You must have thought of this before," she said, slightly puzzled.

"Perhaps, vaguely," Margaret admitted halfheartedly, "but now — why, Mary, compared to them we are as rich as kings and emperors."

"And we always have been, dear," responded Mary, the puzzled look not leaving her face.

At this juncture Mary Taylor, one of their indentures, interrupted them.

"Oh, Taylor," said Mary, "are you replacing Lea?"

"That I am, milady," replied the maid.

"Did she seem hurt?" asked Margaret.

"No, milady, that she did not."

"Poor Lea," said Mary, "if only she had remained behind."

"Begging your pardon," Taylor interrupted, "may I say Lea is that happy to be going with us, she would make no complaint. I think she understands, milady."

Margaret and Mary made no comment. Lea should be travelling as their personal servant but after four gentlewomen, who would also occupy the cabin, had involuntarily shied from Lea's forbidding appearance, the Brent sisters, out of consideration for all, had arranged for Lea to join the other servants.

Margaret sighed. Turning to Mary, she suggested, "Suppose we go on deck and join Fulke and Giles?"

"There will be plenty of time for these small matters," Mary agreed. "You may take charge, Taylor."

It was no small matter for either of them to negotiate the steep, narrow companionway with their long serge skirts which they had had made especially for this fall voyage. Though October was but a few days old the air already carried the chill of fall: at sea cold weather could be expected.

Giles met them at the entrance to the hatch.

"I was just coming to call you. Come, now, quickly," he said, helping them out on the deck, "we've sighted the *Sovereign*."

Presently the three of them had gained the quarter deck, and joined Fulke at the stern.

There to the south, riding on a gentle southeast wind, the October afternoon sun full upon her white topsails, they saw the *Sovereign of the Seas*, epitome of all the resplendent pride and majesty that was England, slowly coming into port.

For a moment they stood spell-bound in silent admiration. Fulke and Giles grasped the taffrail so firmly that their knuckles showed white. Margaret felt a suffocating lump rise in her throat. Mary opened her mouth to utter an awed "Oh!" but no sound came. Then, as so often happens in such moments, they broke their astonished silence all at once with trivial, inadequate comments:

"A proud ship," said Fulke.

"Sits well in the water," contributed Giles.

"His Majesty's golden fleece," breathed Mary as though she were uttering a prayer.

Margaret made no comment. Giles turned to her: "You are not often at a loss for words," he observed. "Thinking mayhap you would like to sail forth on that proud monarch?"

"She must be haunted by the people we found on the Hoe," answered Margaret.

Giles turned away in mild disgust. Margaret was in one of her idealistic moods, obviously. He always found these a bore.

How long they had stood there, watching the *Sovereign* bearing down on them, no one could say, but the silent vigil was broken by a strange voice behind them, saying,

"Impressive! But is she fit to be a man-of-war?"

As she turned with the others Mary caught her breath. Somewhere she had heard that voice before.

Its owner, they discovered, was a pleasant man in his thirties. Instinctively they knew he was a priest and realized at once that his identity must remain secret. No detail of his dress gave a clue: perhaps it was his approach and bearing, his disarming manner which was so in keeping with many like him who had been harbored through the years at Larke Stoke.

"Copely is the name," said the stranger, then, "and you will be the Brents from Larke Stoke. Am I right?"

The name was not familiar to Mary, and yet . . .

It was Margaret who knew.

"We have met before, Mr. Copely — of an evening as I recall."

And then Mary knew, too.

"Indeed, Mistress Brent," replied the priest, "and a stormy evening it was. I hope never again to hear such thunder or be so soaked in a like downpour. Yes, indeed, 'I was a stranger' and you and your good sister took me in!"

"And you left before dawn," added Mary, her memory now serving her well enough.

"Where was I?" asked Giles. "Why am I still in the dark?"

"You were in Virginia," Margaret answered him, "and there are many, you well know, who have never signed the guest book at Larke Stoke."

"Sorry," said Fulke, "but I do not remember."

"Hardly," laughed Mary. "As usual you were asleep before the fire in your own study."

"You forget we have been disciplined in secrecy," put in Margaret.

"A universal discipline, I might add," interjected Mr. Copely, "which may have much to do with the fact I am now alive and going out to Maryland. I learned from His Lordship," he went on sociably, "that my former hosts were also coming out on this good ship, *Charity*."

"A good ship if she abides by her name," said Mary in a tone which left much room for her own personal doubts.

While they had been chatting thus, the *Sovereign of the Seas*

had come well on, and now not far away in Plymouth harbor she dropped anchor. Those aboard the *Charity* could clearly see the movements on her decks, and in her rigging.

"Oh, me," wailed Mary. "Now that such a giant of the seas is so close to us — Fulke, do you really believe this tiny little ship can ever cross the Atlantic? Had we not better wait for a bigger one?" Mary's eyes matched the pleading in her voice, as she placed a timid hand on Fulke's arm.

"Take heart, sister," encouraged her brother, patting her hand, "the *Mayflower* crossed to Massachusetts and returned to this very port, and the *Charity* is of her vintage. She has survived the Armada."

"But that was just around here," protested Mary plainly not in the least reassured.

"She is indeed a monument of ambition," observed Mr. Copely now of the *Sovereign*.

"She far outclasses the *Royal Prince*, eh?" asked Giles.

"Aye," nodded Mr. Copely taking his pipe, which he had been puffing furiously, from his teeth, "she is the largest vessel yet built in our English yards."

This the four Brents knew full well. Designed by Phineas Pett and his son Peter, the *Sovereign of the Seas* proudly boasted elaborate gilded carvings from stem to stern. Upon her beak-head was a mounted effigy of King Edgar trampling seven fallen monarchs. In her presence every other ship in the harbor seemed Lilliputian. With her eyes glued to the *Sovereign* it is no wonder the timid Mary felt as though the deck of the *Charity* shrank under her very feet.

"We are no more than a shallop," she said in an awed voice.

"If only we were sailing on *her*," she went on. Then despairing of sympathy from her own kin, she turned to Mr. Copely and added, "Do you really think this ship is the *Charity*? Could we have mistakenly boarded the wrong vessel?"

"Come, come, Mary," said Fulke, affectionately, giving Mr. Copely no opportunity to reply. "If the Lord wants us to make port in safety, we will. If such is not His will, we would not desire it either."

"Very philosophical," said Margaret with marked sarcasm, "but

not a drop of comfort in it. I am quite frank to say if the Lord wants my life now, I should find it very difficult to submit without protest."

"Which is a very human view," said Mr. Copely understandingly.

"Jove! Will you look at that foc'sle," said Giles now in some wonder, "it is curved!"

"That is the latest invention of the designer," offered Mr. Copely.

"It is certainly an inspiring blaze of gold and color in the sunlight," sighed Margaret, "a beautiful, glorious ship!"

Fulke leaned against the taffrail and looking past Mary at Margaret, he asked playfully, "Would you now give up Maryland to join the Royal Navy and ship aboard the *Sovereign*?"

The others laughed.

"The sea has its stories," said Margaret seriously, "many lives are less fruitful than that of a sailor."

"But they are such rough men!" protested Mary in slight disgust.

Giles looked at Margaret. "Except for your usually evident idealism which is seldom practical," he said, "you have the heart and head of a man."

Margaret frowned with displeasure.

"It would be interesting to know where she has been," mused Mr. Copely.

"Might be on one of half a dozen missions," Giles surmised.

"Right," followed Fulke. "There is plenty to take her beyond our shores. The fisheries, for example. I learn we must protect them from the Dutch. . . ."

"And we must give Spain assistance in guarding Dunkirk from the designs of the French," Giles added.

"Oh, yes, and the awful pirates from Algiers, and the Barbary States!" contributed Mary, with a shudder.

"What a prize the *Sovereign* would be for them," concluded Margaret, darkly.

It was a southeast wind which had ushered the *Sovereign* into port. Bosworth had waited a week for such a favorable opportunity. Now he determined this same wind would start the two hundred ton *Charity* on her voyage to Maryland.

The Brents and Mr. Copely were still leaning over the stern, still fascinated by England's newest and greatest ship, when suddenly they heard Bosworth command:

"Mr. Mate, take your anchor!"

And with a roaring voice with which all would soon become familiar, the mate cried out:

"Lay aloft there and shake out fore and main topsails."

As the windlass hauling in the anchor whined and squeaked, the Brents watched the crew scale the rigging to carry out the mate's orders; and they heard from the Hoe cheers of God-speed and farewell. The milling crowd ashore, as well as the sudden activity aboard the *Charity* momentarily detached all attention from the *Sovereign*.

Now the *Charity*'s sails were shaken from their gaskets, the clews sheeted home and the yards braced up to meet the gentle southeast wind. Then seeing the sails take the wind, and noting a man at the whipstaff on the main deck and lastly, slowly but certainly feeling the *Charity* herself gradually gather motion, Mary turned to Margaret with a stifled sob. Throwing her arms about her sister she buried her face in her rough mohair coat.

"I am sorry, dear," apologized Mary tearfully. "It is all right — I am happy — I want to go — but — but — oh, my darling, this is farewell to our beloved England!"

Margaret gently patted Mary's shaking shoulders; but for her iron self-control she would have wept, too. England had given them years of misery and sorrow, but she had also given them the graciousness of her countryside, the priceless treasure of old friends, rich traditions, soil hallowed by the blood of heroes and martyrs, — home. Never had Margaret loved England so well as at this moment when of her own free will she drew away from her shores, perhaps never to return.

"All hands muster aft!"

This new command diverted Margaret's attention. She noticed the decks were a confusion of running gear. All of them stepped aside as the crew began to assemble.

Then Bosworth said, "Mr. Mate, pick your watches."

Whereupon Pursall, the first mate, chose the first man, who stepped to the larboard side of the deck. Then the second mate,

Jenkins, selected a man who moved to the starboard. This picking and choosing continued alternately between the first and second mate until all the crew was lined up either on the larboard or starboard.

Then, turning to Bosworth, Pursall said, "Watches are chosen, sir."

"Set your watch," replied Bosworth.

The larboard watch was detailed to tasks on deck. Their mates of the starboard watch went below to rest or attend to stowing their belongings and securing their sea chests under their hammocks in the narrowly restricted foc'sle.

Above decks the air still rang with occasional orders:

"A pull on the lee fore braces!"

"Belay that!"

"Stow the anchors!"

Ropes were coiled down, anchors brought over the side and securely lashed in their chocks.

But now the Brents turned their backs on this routine and for a long while watched their native land grow fainter and smaller in the distance. Even Giles, who because he had gone to Virginia in 1625 and therefore had assumed the superior air of one who has been through an experience previously, was now absorbed. The last rays of the western sun still reflected from the magnificent *Sovereign* as she rode at anchor, at ease after her vigilant mission. So they watched until twilight fell and their eyes smarted and ached. Then they turned their faces west towards Maryland.

True to her word, Mary was seasick almost before they were off Land's End about midnight.

Many others succumbed later for there was precious little flying fish weather throughout the whole passage. In spite of storm and tempest, however, Margaret did not submit to *mal-de-mer* until about four weeks before their arrival at St. Maries. Then it was not so much the motion of the storm-battered ship which upset her as a profound appreciation of the real character of the ship's master upon whose judgment their whole safety depended.

The Brents were on the quarter deck next morning in company with Justinian Snow, who was returning to Maryland to join his brother Marmaduke, Mr. Copely and of all persons, Lea! She

had found the air in the servants' cabin wholly unbearable, had come above long before dawn, to the great annoyance of the crew, and now all unconsciously mingled with the passengers. Margaret gently told her to join the other servants. From the break of the poop, the ship's master Bosworth extracted from the company an oath promising that all would be "clean, peaceable, sober, moderate and pious" while aboard: that all would obey the master in all things. They were sworn to agree that should anyone rebel against the ship's rules, or steal, or be proven an Infidel his punishment should be decided by a majority vote of the passengers.

After this formality, cooks were appointed from among the servants. Bosworth instructed these that they were not to commence their fires at their own pleasure, but only with his permission; further that water from the ship's store to be allowed for cooking would be determined by the capacity of the kettles.

Passengers were to take no alarm, warned Bosworth, should they smell smoke while at sea, for in that case he would be living up to his promise to keep the *Charity* clean by fumigating the air with a mixture of gunpowder and vinegar poured on a red hot iron coal shovel. Standing beside her sister, Mary inwardly groaned in anticipation of the unsavory odor of the fumigation.

Shortly after this, Mary took to her straw bed in the cabin and remained there for most of the voyage. When nausea did not grip her, her heart was heavy with apprehension of all the unpleasantness which she imagined could disturb them in Maryland, or she was miserably homesick for Gloucestershire.

In spite of the motion the clear salt air was a bracer to many. But fair weather did not last long and the major part of the voyage proved a ceaseless struggle with contrary winds often of tempest temper, high seas and drenching rains.

While the good weather lasted, the Brents, except Mary, spent many hours watching the crew busy about their various tasks. Except for Giles this was their first voyage. Ship life held the fascination of the unknown.

They watched a young seaman swinging in a bos'n's chair with his pot of evil-smelling galley fat and tallow mixture slushing down the mast so the parrels would run easily. They heard, often repeated, the ritual:

"Hello, aloft!"

"Aye, aye, Sir."

"No holidays there!"

"Aye, aye, Sir."

They hovered about the cook as he removed great chunks of salted "old horse" from the harness cask to soak it for days on end in sea water before it could be eaten. They watched with intense curiosity the daily heaving of the log to determine the speed of the *Charity*.

The small livestock, poultry, pigs, lambs and goats were a constant source of interest on the waist deck. They were sheltered under the long boat which, turned upside down over the main hatch, rested on chocks and was securely lashed down. Inside this sixteen foot boat was yet a smaller one, the jolly. Beneath this snug shelter, barnyard life made the best of shipboard.

One day Margaret and Giles noted two sailors rummaging through one of the ship's lockers on the main deck, when one of them exclaimed:

"I say, Bo, look you here! The tail o' a shark, as I'm my mother's son!"

"So 'tis, so 'tis," replied his mate.

"Dried up since our spell in the tropics, eh? And the smell is not the sweetest. . . ."

"Aye, but 'tis good luck, man. That bit o' it will be sweet."

The other thoughtfully rubbed the stubble on his chin. "Wot say, we nail 'er to the jib boom?" he asked.

"And wot's agin' it? 'Tis good luck we kin use on every voyage."

Giles and Margaret laughed over this innocent superstition. They watched the two sailors in the perilous business of nailing the old shark's tail to the very tip end of the jib boom. Margaret did not breathe easily until both men were back on the deck. Then she went to give this amusing bit of news to Mary.

But that night, succumbing to a heart attack, Justinian Snow died. The next day he was buried at sea, but the shark's tail, pointing into the wind was still secure to the jib boom. The death puzzled the crew. Even though it had merely claimed a passenger

rather than one of their own number, death was not their idea of good luck.

High winds prevailed throughout that day and by sunset the sky was black with foreboding. The weather assumed an ugly and freakish temper. The mate ordered all to stay below in the cabins. Barely had this order been fulfilled when there was a sudden, deafening noise like a cannon shot. The main to'gallant sail was blown to ribbons.

"Let go to'gallant halliards," bellowed Pursall, "four men aloft! Get that sail in!"

Meanwhile others scurried below to the sail locker to break out a new sail for their mates to set.

This took all of thirty minutes. In that time night accented the blackness of the heavens and darkness shrouded the *Charity*.

As Pursall kept his eye on the men aloft, Tim, a member of the crew surprised him with, "If you please, sir, I would talk to the captain." Pursall gave no indication that he noticed Tim's agitation.

"Oh, you would!" he replied sarcastically. "'Fraid?"

"I want to talk to the Captain — this very night!"

"Want to tell the Captain about this bad weather, maybe?"

"No, Mr. Mate, sir," said Tim between his teeth as his temper rose. "Worsen 'an that. 'Tis serious business I would be speakin' with 'im about."

Pursall snorted. What business could be more serious than the safety of the *Charity* and her human cargo? He was attending to that.

"Out with it," he growled now, losing patience with Tim.

"To the Captain, aye, sir," insisted Tim. "'Tis a matter touching the eternal souls of every livin' man aboard, sir — even your own!" Tim added the last as a desperate inducement.

But he made no further progress just then, because another resounding crash blew out the fore topsail, and he was the first of four whom Pursall picked to go aloft and get it in. There was much mumbling and grumbling in the rigging as Tim expressed his opinions to the others, but the noise of wind and weather kept this from the first mate. Up there in the darkness the men had

to cling for dear life, for now the *Charity* was pitching violently in heavy seas and each time she momentarily regained an even keel she shook furiously as though to loose from her rigging every man aloft.

To add to his problems, when the watch was relieved at eight bells, the ship's carpenter informed Pursall that his soundings in the ship's well showed the *Charity* to be leaking dangerously. Pursall ordered a detail and two reliefs to the pump.

The next day was the fifteenth out of Plymouth. Pursall had the lifelines rigged. These were stout ropes leading from the fore to the mizzen fife rails, about five feet above the deck. They were boused taut by short lines at intervals to the bulwarks. None too soon were these precautions taken, for on the night of that fifteenth day the seas rose so high as to top the weather rail and fill the deck.

"She's taking the green!" yelled Pursall into the men's cabin shortly after six bells. "Passengers stand by to man the pump."

When he returned to the main deck, Tim, whom Pursall had completely forgotten in the twenty-four intervening hours since he had last spoken to him, again begged to speak to the Captain.

"All right!" yelled Pursall. "Now!"

But when at last Tim had gained his desire and stood before Bosworth he was uneasy and tongue-tied.

"Come, come! Out with it! What do you want?" demanded Bosworth, his temper matching the weather.

"It's a witch, sir!" blurted Tim.

"You fool!" stormed Bosworth.

"Aye, maybe," said Tim. "First a passenger dies, then two topsails blows to ribbons, then she springs a leak, then —"

"Enough! You crazy, white-livered fool!" roared Bosworth. "Go below and behave yourself!" he ordered.

Tim gave the ship's master a nasty look; but he obeyed.

Inwardly he was terrified. He sincerely believed there was a witch aboard and now that he had informed Bosworth, what would the witch do to him, personally? He had not long to find out. He crossed the main deck, clinging to the lee lifelines, and barely kept his footing, so angrily was the *Charity* tossing and lurching.

Midway to his destination from the corner of his eye he glimpsed the long boat. Before he could cry out or escape, its lashings gave way and the boat came towards him full force.

His yell of agony as it crushed him against the bulwarks brought a half dozen seamen to his assistance. Steadying themselves on the heaving deck, they pulled and hauled until finally Tim was clear. Then he sank, helpless, into the lee scuppers. Beneath and all around him were drowned chickens, their sopping feathers plastered flush to the deck. Pigs snorted and squealed, lambs cried in frenzy, and two goats scurried off wildly into the darkness. Three lambs were mangled and bleeding, but their blood barely pooled on the deck before a fresh burst of green sea washed it away.

Finally his mates managed to get Tim to quarters where they found his leg was broken. This was a matter for the Captain, himself.

Grudgingly Bosworth came to exercise his amateur skill, binding the wounded leg to a splint secured from the ship's carpenter. He seemed to give no heed to Tim's groans and outbursts of agony as he roughly attempted to set it. When he had finished and was about to leave, Tim spoke.

"Well?" demanded Bosworth in a black mood. His great hulk of a body towered like a giant over the helpless Tim.

"It 'twas the witch, sir!" hissed Tim between clenched teeth.

"The devil take you!" roared Bosworth and stormed from the foc'sle.

But now the crew needed no more signs. Every one of them believed Tim was right. There was a witch aboard the *Charity*: lady luck would be appeased with nothing less than witch's blood. From that moment on, every human soul on board was subject to suspicion.

Obedient to authority, Margaret had now remained below deck six days and nights. She longed for nothing so much as one breath of clean fresh air. At best the ventilation in the cabin left much to be desired, but all through this foul weather there had been not one change of air; and many of the occupants had been violently ill.

As the storm grew in intensity Mary's indisposition developed

into a genuine illness. She had alternate chills and fever, headache and increasingly recurring nausea, although she had eaten practically nothing. More than once when the galley steward had started out with a basket of food for the ladies' cabin, he had lost his footing, and the food swam in the water ways. Most of the ladies lay still on their mattresses, white with fright, absorbed by prayers or fears or both. A few nervous and restless ones cried or moaned as they frantically paced the small passage in the center of the cabin.

Frequently in these six days and nights Margaret had vividly recalled Fulke's words about the will of God. She did not want to die; but valiantly she tried to pray "Thy will be done." If it was God's will that she should die, at least He was giving her ample warning, and even through her terror she knew a deep gratitude for this blessing. Night and day she and Mary had recited the Rosary, and although they completed the fifteen decades each time, they always began with the Glorious Mysteries: the Resurrection, the Ascension, the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Tearful, frightened voices had joined them, and generally as the prayer grew, tension and hysteria subsided: the recitation of the Rosary brought calm into the close cabin.

Over and over the sisters wondered how their servants were surviving. Taylor was hopelessly ill. Margaret had begged to be allowed to visit the others but she was forbidden thus to risk her life. She worried particularly about Lea. The others were young — but Lea — this would be a dreadful experience for the old woman. Once in a while she wondered, too, about the animals. She presumed the poultry and lambs were lost. What about the horses? And the dogs she had brought for herself and Leonard Calvert?

They worried, also, about their brothers, and Mr. Copely. They knew that all male passengers were taking their turn at the great pump. How many, many times Margaret and Mary implored God's protection for them.

The raging storm was entering its seventh night when Giles and Fulke went out on deck in readiness to relieve the men then at the pump. Among these latter were Henry Corbin and Francis Darby, who, as the brothers approached, were easing up on their

job to listen in astonishment to an exchange between Bosworth and a seaman. Water was dripping from the man's oil skin hat as he had just come through another wave which had crashed over the *Charity*.

"Captain, sir!" he yelled above the din of wind and wave, "our trouble will soon be agone, sir. We've got 'er."

"You've got what?" cried Bosworth, cupping his ear the better to hear the other.

"The witch!" yelled the man over the gale which at the very word seemed to increase its ferocity, zipping and howling through the rigging. "She's got the mark."

"Go back to your station!" roared Bosworth.

"The crew demands a trial!" answered the seaman refusing to obey the Captain's command.

The noise was so great that Giles and Fulke had difficulty in hearing clearly all that was said, and so they missed the seaman's next words:

"She's got the mark on 'er face!"

Bosworth looked about uncomfortably and noted Corbin and Darby staring at him.

"The pump!" yelled Bosworth.

Whereupon the two men returned their full attention to the work at hand.

Presently through the dusk and the water came Mr. Copley and a young lad not more than sixteen. With Giles and Fulke they then took over the pump. As the new foursome relieved the exhausted men, Corbin and Darby remained close to Bosworth. He was still facing the seaman, and now stormed at him:

"Man your station, you blithering fool!"

"Not until you kill the witch!" roared the other defiantly.

And then all were momentarily startled by a thin, frantic scream which rent through the racket of the elements, piercing to the very heart all who heard.

Corbin and Darby looked at each other in terror. The new team at the pump worked more furiously, as though driven by a lash.

But as though he had been deaf to it, Bosworth turned on the belligerent seaman:

"You damn fool!" he cursed, "you would mutiny when we are seconds from death."

Grabbing a belaying pin he was about to strike the man when, through a sheet of green water, another seaman appeared, and before he could regain his breath to speak, another piercing, heart-rending scream rang through the semi-darkness.

"She's marked on 'er'ead, too!" roared the second seaman. "By God she is a witch!"

The men at the pump were preoccupied. They could not hear all that was said.

"Man your station!" roared Bosworth for the third time. "Back, back, or 'tis you will be killed. I'll have no mutiny!" Then peering about in the thick dusk, he yelled, "Pursall! Pursall!"

But there was no answer.

"Blast it!" he cried.

"'Ere, you," he roared then, pushing the young boy aside, "take this boy's place! Pump, you fool, you witch-hunter, pump!"

But the crazed and superstitious seaman made no move to obey, and the lad resumed his post.

"We've got her fast to the capstan," cried the second seaman. "We've thrown all 'er truck into the sea. Now, sir, you throw 'er in with your own hands, or — "

"I don't know what you're talking about," roared Bosworth, reaching out to knock the man down. But the seaman dodged him. Their eyes blazed at each other.

And then Bosworth backed down.

He resolved perhaps, that the situation was hopelessly beyond his control or intervention; that the lives of all were more important than that of one.

"See to it," he warned both seamen, "that you can justify your deed by the law of England."

A fiendish triumph flared in the eyes of the two members of the crew. Corbin and Darby, still standing by like eavesdroppers, looked at one another fearlessly. Only the four at the pump took no notice: the even rhythm sending water back into the sea at approximately the same rate the *Charity* took it aboard. The lives of all depended upon that pump. And now, having no confi-

dence in the strength and endurance of the young boy, Bosworth again shoved him aside, and took his place.

"Get another passenger for this place, son," he ordered, "this is man's work."

The lad disappeared, and Bosworth gave his own strength to the task, muttering to himself the while.

For several moments no one spoke. The wind howled, and the seas crashed against the *Charity* as though furious that her hull would not yield to their savage onslaughts. Dusk was deepening into the blackness of night.

Then, suddenly looking almost directly overhead and stunned by what he saw, Giles yelled, "Look! Look, yonder! The fore yard-arm!"

"Good God!" cried Fulke, gasping in horrified astonishment.

Bosworth did not look.

Mr. Copely followed the gaze of the brothers. His face froze with horror, as from his heart he cried, "Good Jesus! Mercy!"

Then turning to Bosworth, Mr. Copely yelled, "Bosworth! Stop this! Mr. Bosworth!"

But if Bosworth heard he neither answered nor took his eyes from the deck beneath his feet.

With an expression that was an imperative command, then, Mr. Copely abandoned his post. Darby, still standing by with Corbin, filled the gap immediately. All bent their full energy to the task, as though the only alternative was to roast in Hell fire. In spite of the cold, the wind and the penetrating rain, sweat saturated their clothes.

Giles and Fulke had no doubt of Mr. Copely's intention when he left them. But, even as the priest himself, they knew he would be too late. And his tragic face, when he returned to them a few moments later, plainly showed this to be the fact. With a great effort, as though a tremendous weight held it down, he motioned his head upwards. The Brents followed his direction. They saw, silhouetted against the angry sky, swaying with the hard tossed *Charity*, the body of a small woman dangling from the fore yard-arm. The head lay almost on the chest. As they looked, horrified and helpless, the taut rope suddenly slackened, a huge wave rose

to gather the corpse, and over the din of the elements all could hear the voices of the crew raised in one long, bloodcurdling cheer.

Giles and Fulke reacted alike. For the instant they abandoned the pump and reached the bulwarks just in time. They felt as though all the blood had been drained from their own veins. When they returned, they heard Mr. Copely saying the *De Profundis*. The brothers exchanged significant glances; the prayer was a consolation. Then, bracing their sea and sweat-soaked bodies to the task before them, through their firm stiff jaws came the words of the psalm in unison with the priest.

Ten minutes later they were relieved.

They all went to the round house to dry out, and presently Bosworth followed, a seaman behind him.

"She is dead, sir," the latter announced with evident relief.

"I saw nothing," flared Bosworth. "I do not know what you are talking of." He blinked and scowled in apparent discomfort as water dripped from his bushy eyebrows.

"Who is dead?" demanded Giles, furious with Bosworth, and resisting an impulse to beat him.

"The witch! Mary Lea!" said the seaman.

He left then, banging the door behind him.

Fulke and Giles paled. Their eyes bespoke utter shock and horror. They steadied themselves against the bulkhead as they heard the distracted Bosworth say again:

"I don't know what he is talking about." With more violence than necessary, Bosworth shook out his great coat, then tossed it on a sea chest.

The Brents and Mr. Copely stared dumbfounded: here, indeed, they faced Pontius Pilate.

Meanwhile Corbin and Darby were spreading the story through the cabins.

By dawn the tempest had not subsided one iota. If possible it became even more furious. And the crew began anew their murmuring among themselves. Was there still a witch aboard? Indeed, the trial they were passing through could well be the work of a dozen witches. Hearing of the continued suspicions, Giles and Fulke feared for their sisters. Now when not at the pump one

of them stood guard outside the ladies' cabin, and they arranged a change in detail too, so that Mr. Copely might relieve them when it came their turn at the pump.

Giles had been the one who had whispered the news to Margaret the following morning. Margaret almost fainted from the shock. She wanted to keep the tragedy from Mary as long as possible, although she realized when Maryland was sighted, Mary must be told. But, suppose they were not destined to reach Maryland? Then this should be one sorrow Mary would not know.

But Margaret's consideration of Mary was futile.

That day the galley steward managed a successful trip to the cabin with provisions.

And after he had left: — "A witch — Mary Lea — a witch was hung — Mary Lea."

So the word buzzed around.

Mary heard.

She sought Margaret's eye for confirmation: and found it. Then she turned her face to the bulkhead and resigned her soul to the will of God. This was too much. She prayed for death. So she lay a day and a night.

On the twenty-second of November, at dawn, the *Charity* entered the broad Potomac. Before sunset the Brents would feel the good earth beneath their feet.

Now that the ship was entering port, Pursall was busy again. He ordered the bos'n with his lead line to the fore channels. At regular intervals the man swung the line over his head and threw it forward into the river, calling back over his shoulder as he hauled it in again,

"Three fathoms."

"Four fathoms."

Idly the Brents watched this procedure through fifteen or twenty casts; but ship life, as such, no longer held an interest for them.

Mary, pale and haggard, was on deck with her brothers and Margaret; knowing in the depths of her heart that she had best learn to love Maryland for she would never see England again. She had taken her first and last voyage across the sea.

The tragedy of the crossing had taken all the spark of adventure

from Fulke and Giles. They watched the approaching land with listless interest. Even Margaret, who for so many years and months had looked forward to this moment, now appearing worn and wretched, beheld her future home with dull eyes and a heart that was numb.

But as though no untoward event had occurred; as though no unfavorable winds had hampered her, the ship triumphantly entered St. Maries Bay, rounded the point where stood the great mulberry tree and finally maneuvered to the public dock on St. George's River.

The *Charity* had made port in safety, according to the will of God.

PART II
MARYLAND
1638-1647

One

THROUGH months of wakeful nights and routine days Margaret had looked forward with ardent anticipation and vivid imagination to the great moment when the Brents would arrive in Maryland. She had fancied herself stepping from ship to shore, pausing dramatically to take a deep breath of Maryland's soft air, fragrant with freedom, graciously giving her hand in greeting to Leonard Calvert. Over and over in imagination Margaret had rehearsed this picture; she knew the reality of this event would be indelibly etched on her memory for all time.

And indeed it was, but not as she had imagined it. Arriving on the Feast of St. Cecilia, 1638, the countryside was drab and disappointing. It has never occurred to her that Leonard, in company with Captain Thomas Cornwaleys would row out and board the *Charity* before she docked — so eager would be his welcome. Margaret had never imagined the Atlantic crossing would be such a harrowing experience that the Brents' response to such a cordial welcome would be listless and indifferent. And finally, in her imaginings, Margaret had not considered she would walk down the gangplank so hurriedly as to trip and be spared a bad fall only because Leonard Calvert was there to save her. Her one enjoyment, at that moment, was a dumb relief to feel, at last, the good, solid earth beneath her feet. Her memory recorded the Brents' arrival in Maryland as a prosaic affair.

Leonard Calvert, too, had looked forward to this moment. He had envisioned welcoming these old friends as a cordial gay event, spattered with laughter, elated greetings and a deep feeling of real joy that at last they had arrived. These anticipations he had shared with Captain Cornwaleys. But now, not only were Mar-

garet and Mary apathetic, but Giles and Fulke had given him no more than a perfunctory greeting, as though they had only parted a few hours previously. Leonard was puzzled, embarrassed and somewhat offended, but chivalrously tried to conceal these emotions. A few days later, when the Council received affidavits covering the frightful event aboard the *Charity*, he understood and sympathized.

The girls' spirits revived a trifle when, from the group of on-lookers on the dock, emerged their old friend, Eleanor Hawley. The three had been girls together in Gloucestershire, the very sight of Eleanor was a tonic and a comfort.

Eleanor and Jerome Hawley, a childless couple, had come out to Maryland in the *Ark* and *Dove* expedition in 1633.

"You are to stay with me," Eleanor said as she affectionately greeted the girls, and tucking an arm in each of theirs, she went on, "Leonard will accommodate your brothers at St. Gabriel's; but I do insist you both — "

"That is such a welcome plan," interrupted Mary gratefully. "You are still the same dear Eleanor. You have not changed one iota."

"Oh, but I have," replied their friend. Her voice had a sad note. She looked first at Mary, always her favorite of the two, and then at Margaret. "You do not know, do you? You had not heard? Either of you?"

"Heard what?" asked Margaret, apprehensively.

They walked on in silence for a few steps. Then, looking straight ahead, Eleanor said quietly, "Jerome died last July." She paused. "It was very sudden," she added, as her eyes misted and a little tremor vibrated in her voice. "His horse threw him."

In sympathy both Brent sisters pressed Eleanor's arm linked in one of theirs, but neither spoke.

"So you see," Eleanor resumed, her composure recovered, "I will be more than honored by your company for as long as you wish to stay, unless — " She stopped on the pathway. "Perhaps you would like to visit on one of the manors — the Lewger's for instance? Anne Lewger did say she would be happy to welcome you."

"But we know Anne only slightly," objected Margaret.

"And you so well," added Mary.

But when they approached the small house adjacent to the Chapel, and Eleanor said, "Here we are, almost home," the girls were surprised. This was no more than a tiny cabin. Unaware of their reaction Eleanor ushered them in, showed them to the little spare room, really her own bedroom, and bade them settle their wraps while she procured hot beef broth and biscuits for them.

Alone, Margaret and Mary stared at each other in amazement. Eleanor had summoned no servant, had given no orders; had gone, herself, to get their refreshment.

They sipped the hot broth and munched the hard biscuits before the fire in Eleanor's cozy living room. Both Margaret and Mary realized widowhood had mellowed her habitual charm and graciousness; but after a half hour, Margaret could contain her curiosity no longer.

"Eleanor," she demanded, "do you live here completely alone? Have you no servants?"

"No house servant," replied her hostess smiling, "I have one for the fields, John Halfthead. Yes, I am alone — by preference."

"And your house —" Mary hesitated, knowing she was unconsciously verging on rudeness.

" — Is so small?" filled in Eleanor, still smiling.

"Yes, why?" asked Margaret. Except for the kitchen and a small cubicle she suspected off the opposite end of the living room from their bedroom, she was sure she had seen it all.

"Why, this is the way I want it," replied Eleanor, much more at ease than either of her guests.

Both girls were puzzled. In England, Eleanor had lived in luxury.

"I just do not understand," said Mary frankly, as she sipped the savory broth from her pewter cup.

"I suppose you cannot," said Eleanor. Her face was serious and grave. "But when you have no children and you are left alone in the world, you really require very little room."

"There must be more to it than that," objected Mary.

"You could have returned to England and your father's roof," protested Margaret.

"And leave the wee Chapel yonder?" asked Eleanor, inclining

her head in the direction of the Catholic Chapel next door. "No, my dears. That Chapel is more than half my life. No one else cares for the vestments or the altar. More than that, I assist at Mass each morning. Has England so changed that I could enjoy that privilege there?"

Of course England had not.

"No," Eleanor went on, "when Jerome died all the materially acquisitive part of me died, too. I am not bitter. I am hushed; I want to withdraw, to renounce, to — can you understand?"

"Yes," replied Margaret gently, "I quite understand."

"I suppose we all react differently to suffering," said Mary.

"Suffering is a great teacher," agreed Eleanor, "if her student is not too rebellious to benefit. One thing I know — suffering never has an inattentive student."

"Perhaps not, but — "

"Let me explain," said Eleanor, smiling at Margaret's confusion. "When Jerome died I released all his indentures, I disposed of all his lands, I kept only this wee home and enough land to support it and me. I devote my time to the unfortunate here. Oh, yes, we do have unfortunates," she insisted, noting the look of surprise in Mary's face. "They are freed indentures who have been imprudent in the management of their affairs."

Margaret shook her head. "Do you mean to say you voluntarily gave up comforts and luxuries?"

"They proved a burden," acknowledged Eleanor.

"But you had never known anything else," objected Mary.

"Which, perhaps, has given all the more charm to the contrast, because I am immeasurably content without them," replied her friend. "Jerome had appointed Captain Cornwaleys his executor," she went on, "and I am endlessly grateful that he has so quickly disposed of the estate as I wished. They were close friends. The Captain was thoroughly familiar with his holdings."

"Close friends," repeated Margaret, "and — well, good gracious, Eleanor, why do you prefer to remain alone, then? At least Mary and I are two, and we have brought eight servants. We will have plenty of protection."

"Protection!" Eleanor laughed. "I doubt the good Captain would be, shall I say, always dependable protection."

"Oh," said Mary, "is he — "

"He is a very handsome, dashing man," Eleanor rushed to allay any fears Mary might have of the Captain's morals. "The whole colony respects and admires him. His opinion is sought constantly. He is almost a daily visitor here since Jerome died — but strictly on business pertaining to the estate," she added quickly. "He has been most conscientious in consulting with me, but — "

"But?" prompted Mary, as Margaret absently munched her biscuit.

"I should never marry him, if that is what you have in mind," said Eleanor, "for I doubt I should be less alone than I am now. The Captain is a very worldly man. I like my own way of living."

"Which we find completely charming," added Mary, fearful that their questions might have offended their hostess.

Their first morning in Maryland dawned dull and damp, a drizzling rain threatening to develop into a three or four day downpour. But Giles and Fulke called early at the Hawley home to escort their sisters and their hostess to Mass. Father Fisher ("Mr. Copely" now free of the necessity of an incognito) offered a Mass of thanksgiving for their safe arrival and was followed at the altar by Father White who offered the same great prayer for the repose of the soul of Mary Lea.

The Brents remained throughout the second Mass, urged by conflicting intentions. Naturally they wanted thus to honor the memory of their old and faithful servant who had come to such a tragically violent end. But, also, they wanted to indulge their new privilege of publicly assisting at the Holy Sacrifice without risk to purse or person. When they finally stepped from the little chapel that November morning all four were refreshed in soul and body. They scanned the Maryland landscape with deep contentment and greeted all comers with cheerful smiles and generous cordiality.

The two Jesuits and Leonard Calvert returned with the Brents to the Hawley home for breakfast. As Eleanor called on Father White to ask a blessing, she apologized for the "trifling" repast she had put before them. But it was ample, and the girls knew some of it had no doubt been prepared the previous evening when they

had yielded to their nervous and physical exhaustion and were sound asleep.

Aside from the fragrant waffles which were embellished with large scoops of fresh butter and fruit syrup, and the usual wild berry tea, other incidentals included a savory concoction of pork scraps, cooked with ground maize and spices, cooled in blocks, then sliced and fried crisp and brown; also hot biscuits, fried chicken, crisp rashers of bacon and smoked ham, and a delicious sauce for these made of dried apples.

All inclined to talk at once, some to inform, the newcomers to inquire. Mary wanted to know about the Indians; Father Fisher about the progress of the Jesuit mission among them; Leonard wanted to relate the details of the affair of Kent Island and Clayborne its troublesome claimant from Virginia; Giles wanted to know about the tobacco crops; Fulke wanted to know about the Assembly proceedings; Father White wanted to recount the vast number of conversions among the Protestants at St. Maries; Margaret wanted to know how soon one could start building; Eleanor wanted to tell both girls of an attractive site for their future home.

Finally with a broad smile on his benign countenance, Father White raised his hand. "Children," he said, "such a buzzing I have not heard since last the bees were busy amongst our flowers. May I suggest —"

"Why not give a short 'instruction,' Father," asked Eleanor Hawley then, "a relation of general coverage?"

"That was my very thought, my child."

"Splendid, Father," said Fulke, "tell us everything and in chronological order."

Father White smiled. "Mary asked about the Indians and so, too, did my companion here," he added, inclining his white head towards Father Fisher. "We have our friends among them, the Piscataways: their enemies are ours, too. It is rumored, mind you, that William Clayborne has their enemies the Susquehannocks under subjection. Others say the Swedes and the Dutch have armed them. Captain Henry Fleete would have us believe the Susquehannocks are the savages who visited a gruesome massacre upon the Virginians some fourteen years ago, killing over two hundred colonists."

Mary shuddered.

"Who is Fleete?" asked Giles.

Father White did not reply. Instead he concluded his observations with the information that ". . . the Governor does not think it safe to permit us to go among the savages for the conversion of their souls. We bow to his wisdom, reluctantly," he added, looking at Father Fisher in a most apologetic fashion.

"But Fleete?" insisted Giles.

"Captain Henry Fleete is a fur trader who greeted us upon our arrival here," Leonard explained. "He informed us he had been a captive among the natives for twenty years past, and indeed, he spoke their language perhaps better than our own."

"Twenty years," put in Margaret. "Why that would mean he had been in Virginia since 1613."

"Exactly," nodded Leonard, "but Fleete keeps his past shrouded in mystery. Perhaps he came as a young apprentice with the Cabots, or with Sir Walter Raleigh's Roanoke colony, — or perhaps he is lying."

Father White looked sharply at Leonard but kept his own counsel.

"How old a man is he?" asked Mary.

"That would be hard to say," replied Leonard. "Living in the out-of-doors as he undoubtedly does much of the time, he is weathered if you understand me. . . ."

"Age is not readily calculated in these parts," assisted Father White, "vigor is nurtured in this healthy climate."

"It must be said for Captain Fleete," Leonard added, looking at Father White for endorsement, "that he was at first invaluable to us as interpreter. He led us to the site of St. Maries where the natives had a village they were ready to abandon, being desirous of moving further inland as a precaution against attack by their enemies. Fleete escorted me to Uwanno, then their chief, who accepted my offered price for St. Maries and cryptically told me, 'I do not tell you to go and I do not tell you to stay.'" Leonard laughed lightly. "We paid in beads and axes, calicoes and knives, and stayed."

"You chose a splendid site," praised Fulke.

"And now," said Giles, "what about Clayborne?"

"Clayborne!" exclaimed Father White, seemingly willing to

resume his role of narrator again. "A member of the Virginia colony who refuses our friendship. Captain Fleete readily transferred his allegiance to my Lord Baltimore, and continues his fur trading here. Not so Mr. Clayborne. In '31 he established a trading post on Kent, an island sixty miles north in the Chesapeake and well within my Lord Baltimore's patent. But this Mr. Clayborne will not admit. There has been bloodshed over this difference."

"Clayborne led the Virginia House of Burgesses into mutiny over this matter," Leonard enlarged, "denouncing the authority of our good friend Governor Harvey, who has suffered much for his friendship towards the Marylanders. Clayborne had the audacity to ship him back to England where he arrived at Plymouth the 14th of July last. Surely the Brents heard of this?"

"Last July the Brents, save Fulke, were travelling the English countryside," said Margaret, "but it is strange Cecilius did not mention this to us."

"He may not have been aware of it," said Giles. "I, myself, found less information in London than upon our travels from Gloucestershire to Wiltshire."

"Howsomever that may be," said Father White, picking up the thread of the narrative, "His Majesty, whom I am constrained to believe is a monarch imbued with the virtue of justice, albeit, shall we say, a partial justice, was irate at this rebellion of Clayborne, and recommissioned Governor Harvey. But alas, the good governor returned a sick and broken man; we are informed his life is despaired of."

"God bless him!" put in Leonard, "He was kindness itself to our father of happy memory when the Virginians refused him hospitality. But there — tell us, Father, of the Maryland Assembly."

"I will yield to you, Mr. Calvert," replied Father White, smiling graciously.

"Our good Father is meticulous," observed Leonard. "Well, Fulke," he went on, "now that Giles has brought me some communications from my good brother, I will call an Assembly Monday, the 25th of February, and you shall see for yourself how it proceeds."

"Will the whole colony be there?" asked Margaret.

"On the contrary," said Leonard, "the Council thinks not at this time. We will send writs to our various Hundreds, instructing them to elect burgesses to represent them."

"Speaking of the Council," put in Giles.

"Yes, yes," Leonard nodded, "you will be a member in good time for this Assembly. Cecilius has stated this as his wish."

"Good," said Giles, beaming, "I wanted to make certain. . . ."

"If you, my good lady, will excuse us," Father White interrupted, addressing Eleanor while motioning to Father Fisher, "my companion and I have much to discuss. I am glad you have come, Father," he added, placing his wrinkled hand on the young Jesuit's shoulder. "There is a great harvest waiting."

"And we heartily thank God for the reapers He has sent," said Leonard, sincerely.

So the breakfast party dispersed. Margaret and Mary joined Eleanor in clearing away and tidying the small room. Fulke returned to St. Gabriel's to supervise the temporary accommodation of their indentures and such of their livestock that had survived the Atlantic voyage. Leonard accompanied Fulke; provincial matters awaited his attention. Only Giles remained, seating himself at the hearth out of range of broom and duster. Here he gazed dreamily into the fire. He was so unusually quiet, that Margaret wondered if he had eaten too well and anticipated indigestion? But she did not question him. She knew from long experience, if an attack came upon him, no one within earshot would escape knowledge of it.

Later, their tidying up completed, the Brent sisters brought their needlework to the fireside. Captain Cornwaleys stopped by, presumably to see Eleanor on a matter of business. But whatever his intention, that lady diverted it immediately.

"You are just in time, Captain, to see me over to poor old Mary Rollins'. She is desperately ill, and no one to tend her."

"But" put in the Captain, returning Giles' nod and wishing, really, to talk to him.

"No 'buts,'" smiled Eleanor. "In this pouring rain you will be such help. I have a basket of provisions to take and these two warm coverlets. If you carry the basket, please, I shall be able to keep the quilts dry under my cloak."

And so the Captain who had come to chat with a man of his own inclinations and mold, was turned about and mustered out into the rain again on an errand of mercy.

Giles resumed his reverie.

Mary took up her handiwork and Margaret was about to do the same, relaxing in the luxury of the quiet and warmth of the room, when her attention was attracted to a small book on the window sill. She reached for it. It was Eleanor's thumbworn copy of Bishop Francis de Sales' "Introduction to a Devout Life" in the original French. She opened it at random and was about to enjoy the further luxury of reading when Giles pierced the silence, saying:

"Girls, I've been doing some calculating. . . ."

"That is not unusual," said Margaret.

"The totals are enormous," Giles went on, ignoring the customary banter.

"As you calculate, they always are," contributed Mary as a follow-up to Margaret.

"If I get only the lowest price now paid — "

"For what, dear?" asked Margaret guilelessly.

"Tobacco!" barked Giles, his expression plainly denoting a struggle between patience and contempt. "As I was saying," he continued, patience at last winning out, "if I get even the lowest price now paid which is two pounds ten shillings per hundredweight; and plant, say, five thousand acres — "

"Yes, Giles, yes, of course," broke in Margaret impatiently, "if you do perhaps you'll be able to buy Scotland and Wales; then you may be able to trade them for Spain and the Netherlands — maybe France will be thrown in for good measure! Do you never think of anything but worldly wealth?"

Giles was disgusted. Without another word he left them, banging the door behind him.

Margaret and Mary looked at each other and laughed.

"Giles is himself again," said Mary.

Margaret nodded smilingly and returned to her reading.

It was dusk when Eleanor returned, the Captain with her. Mary had had posset ready against this moment. As Margaret helped Eleanor off with her wet coat and shoes, Mary poured a

generous portion for both of them. Eleanor was shivering with cold, and Margaret thought her eyes were feverishly bright.

As Cornwaleys took the steaming cup from her, his eyes met Mary's.

"I had forgotten such a bonnie flower might come out of Old England. A toast, Mistress Mary!"

He raised his cup to her.

Mary blushed. "I see the Captain has a gallant tongue."

"Rather I am a connoisseur of charm," corrected the Captain.

"Such banter!" scorned Margaret, joining them with a forced laugh. "Here, Eleanor," she went on, handing her a cup of posset, "drink this down while it is still hot or you will have an illness."

The Captain could not be persuaded to remain for supper and so at last, for the first time that day, the three friends were alone.

"I gave Cecilius' letter to Leonard this morning," volunteered Margaret as they were laying away the supper things.

"And I know just the spot for you," said Eleanor. "Here, let me show you —" And, taking a small piece of paper and a stick of charcoal, she roughly drew them a plan of St. Maries City.

"Now here is where we are," she explained, "here is the Chapel on the northwest corner of Middle and Mattapany Streets. Here is my house, just to the west on Middle Street. Here on St. George's River, south of the Fort and St. Gabriel's is the loveliest tract of land. Look here," she went on eagerly, "you could have the river as one boundary and come in east to Mattapany Street — why, then — then we would be close neighbors!"

"And close to the Chapel," observed Margaret. "We could easily make the distance for daily Mass."

"It would be lovely," agreed Mary.

"And then here, just to the north," resumed Eleanor, "Giles could have a grant."

"Giles will not stay in one spot long, mark my words," said Margaret, studying the locations Eleanor had indicated.

"Margaret is right," added Mary, "Giles will want extensive acreage."

"Good enough," sanctioned Eleanor, "this could be his town house. That would appeal to Giles."

Margaret and Mary chuckled.

"I have already drawn the plans for our — " Margaret paused.
"Mary, what shall we call our house?"

"Must it have a name?" asked Mary apathetically.

"Indeed it must!" answered Margaret, surprised that Mary had evidently given no consideration to this important item.

"I had thought of one most appropriate," put in Eleanor.

"Yes?" urged Margaret.

"It is original," Eleanor warned, "but since you have a special concession from Cecilius — well, why not call it, — the — the 'Sisters' Freehold'?"

Margaret and Mary exchanged glances.

"Why, I think that is splendid," praised Mary.

"And I, too," agreed Margaret with enthusiasm. "It will certainly distinguish our holdings from Giles'."

Then Margaret unrolled a large sheet of paper which she had been fingering since Eleanor began drawing the map.

"Come, look at the plans for the — the Freehold!" she said then, her eyes glinting with delight.

So, by the flickering light of fireside and candle, Margaret spread the plans on the table, while Eleanor and Mary drew up their chairs to study closely the unusual design.

"No second story — " Margaret began.

"No room for guests?" asked Mary critically.

"Oh yes, but in a separate house," suggested Margaret.

The plan she had drawn was a rambling structure, compact nevertheless, and comfortable for two. An entrance hall was flanked by two generous alcoves. "This one for cloaks and wraps and boots and such like impedimenta," she explained, "the one on this side for my office."

"Office!" exclaimed Mary.

Eleanor smiled. "Tobacco accounts?" she asked teasingly.

"A retreat, then," replied Margaret, "a refuge. A peaceful place to think and plan, and yes," with a nod to her hostess, "to figure accounts also."

Mary smiled, then, too. "Continue," she said.

"Well, then," Margaret began, relieved that Mary offered no objections to her private refuge, "then we enter this large living

room and face a great, oh, a very great fireplace. The corners here will have cupboards for our pewter," she went on, now wholly absorbed in her plan, "and down this side of the room will be a corridor leading to our own bedrooms, and down from the opposite side, another corridor opening on an alcove with a fireplace — the dining room, and beyond that the scullery and kitchen. The kitchen chimney will balance mine at the same end of the bedroom wing. Your chimney in your bedroom will balance the one in the dining alcove — "

"Five chimneys!" interrupted Mary at last.

"Um-hum, and here, here in the courtyard you may have your flower garden," Margaret went on, indicating the space surrounded on three sides by the rectangular U shaped house. "There will be a door to every room from this little courtyard, except of course, the kitchen. That will have a door on the outside wall and a covered walk to the servants' quarters."

"You've thought of everything," said Eleanor approvingly.

"And really it is not too fantastic," praised Mary. "I like it, my pet. I am sure, too, there will not be another home in the whole province similarly planned."

"Which detracts nothing from it," observed Margaret.

"Oh, it is such fun to create," said Eleanor. The girls, aware of the humble life she had chosen for herself, wondered at this.

They were talking of woodwork, furnishings, curtains, window openings, iron work, brick or stone chimneys when Leonard Calvert knocked at the door.

After greeting him cordially Eleanor excused herself to prepare a light refreshment.

"Dismal night," he said, removing his cloak and stepping close to the fire.

Seeing him now in this soft light Margaret thought the years had made little change and responsibility had left his face unlined. He was still as young as she remembered him, his beard matching his jet black hair which flowed gracefully over his shoulders. His high color — tuddiness from exposure to weather and outdoor life, was accentuated by the beard. Leonard's most attractive feature was his expressive eyes, dark, sensitive and merry.

These eyes rested upon her especially now, bespeaking affection-

ate regard, as he said to both, "It is good to know the Brents are at last in Maryland." Then noting the diagram on the table, he asked, "What's this?"

"Plans for the Freehold," Mary advised him. "Explain them to Leonard," she said to Margaret then, "while I see if I can help Eleanor."

"We'll have no second story," began Margaret anew, and then she paused. Giving Leonard a smile which bespoke a deep gratitude, she added, "and no priest's holes!"

They laughed softly together.

Margaret returned her attention to the plans, and began elaborating them for Leonard's benefit. She was not aware that his eyes rested upon her and not upon the design she was explaining.

"I am so glad you have come," he interrupted her at last.

"So are we," replied Margaret, and then, "here we will have —"

But she realized then he was not listening.

"I am sorry," she said, now rolling up the plans, "I thought you would be interested."

"Indeed, and I am, Margaret, I swear it. Interested in all that interests you."

"You protest too much," parried Margaret good naturedly.

"If you knew how I have needed you," Leonard continued.

"Me?"

"Yes, you," Leonard affirmed. "How many times I've needed the wise judgment of a woman of sense and perspective — an ingenious lady who can grasp a situation with all its shadings in the twinkling of an eye and make the right decision."

"I grant you have an unusual approach," said Margaret. "Most gentlemen begin with my hair —"

"Which is divine," acknowledged Leonard.

"Oh, come now, Leonard, we are too old for such foolishness."

"The older we are the keener our appreciation," retorted Leonard. "But all 'foolishness' aside —"

"You admit it!" teased Margaret.

"— It is more than I had dared hope, at last to have you here," Leonard concluded seriously, deliberately ignoring her facetiousness. "I am much in earnest, Margaret. Many times

things have arisen which I could have met more successfully if I had had — ”

“Um-hum,” said Margaret, wanting to stop this thought which, intuitively, she could see might lead on to a subject she wished to avoid for all time. “From the little I have seen so far,” she went on now, “I can understand your love of Maryland. You know, St. Maries does not seem vastly different from a little English village. Snug little houses, country roads — in the spring it must be beautiful.”

“It is,” agreed Leonard, “the good God has indeed kissed this land. And our gentry have brought over the customs, the traditions, the clothes and the manners of our English countryside; no detail has been sacrificed to the wilderness.”

“The English will never sacrifice their traditions and culture,” observed Margaret proudly.

Leonard looked at her for a long, silent moment. Then with an inner reluctance, he said, “Come, Margaret, unroll those plans again and show me your new home.”

“Are you prepared to be intelligently interested?” Margaret demanded, though the smile in her eyes softened her words.

“As intelligently interested as I can be,” he declared.

Margaret needed no further invitation. Once again she spread the plans on the table, Leonard helping her, and holding down the side nearest him.

When Eleanor and Mary returned some minutes later, Leonard’s cheek was close to Margaret’s hair, and his free arm was across the back of her chair.

The attentions extended the Brent sisters by the colony’s two leading citizens did not pass unnoticed by the clique of gossips, male and female, which even this sanctuary harbored in usual abundance. But the principals were not concerned.

Thomas Cornwaleys sent the best artisans among his indentured servants to the site of the Sisters’ Freehold, which comprised seventy acres. Here, under the general direction of Tidd, Margaret’s plan on paper gradually became a reality of brick and timber on land. Quarters to house the servants were built first, then the

stable and barn as well as other necessary auxiliary buildings such as a preserving shed and storage cellar for vegetables, a drying shed for fruits and grapes; a candle-making shed and, of course, a laundry shed. By the fastidious Brent sisters, this shed would be used four times a year. Most families, however, had only a semi-annual "wash day."

Margaret and Mary left all details to Tidd, who as their competent steward, adequately anticipated their domestic needs. Their main interest, naturally, was in their own house. Construction on this began immediately following the Feast of the Circumcision.

"Only the mind of an impractical woman could conceive such a fantastic, extravagant and absurd arrangement," commented Giles when he saw Margaret's plans.

"Only a peacock would indulge in a White House," she had retorted hotly. For Giles had planned himself a home far more compact than his sisters' and would have the exterior covered with a plaster paste made of pulverized oyster shells.

Daily Margaret hovered about her slowly rising home while Mary remained for the most part with Eleanor Hawley who, late in January, contracted a heavy and exhausting cold and congestion which she could not seem to shake off, nor could Thomas Gerard, the "chirurgeon" of the colony, alleviate it to any appreciable degree. So Mary nursed Eleanor, and attended daily to those small works of mercy which Eleanor had adopted since her widowhood. Mary also took care of the chapel, as was Eleanor's habit.

When provincial business would permit, Leonard would ride out to the Freehold about mid-day. If he thought the plan for the new home fantastic and absurd, he never said so. If possible his interest in its progress matched Margaret's.

"What's this?" he asked curiously one day, indicating a box-like projection from a corner of a bedroom, extending from ceiling to floor.

"A clothes press," advised Margaret with a twinkle in her eye. "It's my own idea."

Leonard looked baffled.

"I know what you're thinking," she went on, "but why have those clumsy things brought out from England when two partitions at right angles to the corner walls will serve just as well?"

"Clever," admitted Leonard with admiration. "Unconventional, and irregular, but very clever."

They stepped through the unfinished doorway together into the little courtyard whose one open side faced the river.

"Mary is planning her flower garden here," said Margaret. "We brought some box shoots from Larke Stoke to enclose the beds."

"I am so glad you are settling," said Leonard as though he could never omit this theme. "I hope to come often to the Freehold, Margaret, if you will let me."

"Of course," she answered in a matter of fact tone. "We will be more permanent than Giles. He tells me you are giving him two thousand acres on Kent, next to the Fort."

"For a price," acknowledged Leonard.

"That's what I supposed," replied Margaret. "He intimated he was bringing over many more indentures. His precious White House is not yet completed, yet he now plans a manor on Kent." She looked at Leonard searchingly for a moment, then added, "Need I remind you that my brother is a very ambitious man?"

"We need ambitious men," he answered.

"I'm ambitious, too," said Margaret, "though in a different way."

"A becoming trait in the fair sex, too," agreed Leonard, "if directed within feminine channels."

Margaret looked at him intently for a moment. Then she said with a trace of coolness, "My ambitions do not follow the usual feminine patterns, if by that you mean home and family."

"I was afraid of that," said Leonard ruefully, his expressive eyes beginning to cloud with doubt.

"I want to contribute to the building of this colony," Margaret explained.

"What better way to do so than in the most womanly fashion?" asked Leonard. "Naturally the first step would be —" Hope had returned to his eyes, but Margaret dashed it again.

"I know what you would say," interrupted Margaret. "But I don't want marriage. I am too old."

Coming close to her, Leonard lifted her chin in his hand and looked searchingly into her deep, dark eyes. Then he asked, "Too old, Margaret? Too old for love?"

The color rushed to Margaret's cheeks. But she did not move. Her eyes pleaded, spoke the protest she did not utter.

"I see," said Leonard reading them aright, "I thought — I had hoped after twenty years — ten years —" He paused, then in a voice gentle with the love he had for her which plainly she did not return, he finished, "I have waited a long time, my Margaret, including these past five years without even a sight of you, and never a line. Is the past with its tragedy forever to overshadow the future?"

Margaret looked at him dumbly for a moment. Now her eyelids fell, the color still warmed her cheeks. Memory revived her many encounters with Leonard in the past, at home in England and at Baltimore in Ireland. Now she understood. How blind she had been. She remembered that Leonard had always singled her out, had always showered her with little attentions, had always championed her abundant opinions in that day when women were traditionally supposed to have none. He had always defended her independent ways. Why had she been so oblivious to these many indications of esteem and devotion? A fear gripped her heart now. Leonard must not want her; he must not love her. Never, never could she give her heart to any but that one of cherished and tragic memory. She had come to Maryland for freedom and peace and she did not believe that love and marriage could hold either for her.

They had strolled to the river's edge where they came to a standstill. The February sun, caressingly warm with a portent of spring, shone full upon them, picking out all the glint and sparkle in Margaret's auburn curls. Leonard, though her junior in age, stood a full head taller than she. She looked out upon the river, fully aware that his eyes were on herself. She knew, too, that she must speak. How could she tell him she did not want his love — the love of any man? Her will, she found, was battling to gain supremacy for this unnatural idea. The heart in her mocked her will, 'What woman does not want love of a good man — silly, Margaret.' As a refutation, a defense against this normal prompting of her heart, she turned to Leonard then, and looking him full in the eye, said,

"You must understand, Leonard, some memories will not die.

They go on haunting one. I am here to escape, to — Oh!" she went on, her lip trembling, "how can I explain?"

"Don't explain," advised Leonard patiently, putting his arm about her and drawing her close to him. "Don't explain, dear one. Let me gamble a little longer with time. That you are here where I can see and talk to you, and — and touch you — is sufficient for today. Tomorrow —"

" — will never come," finished Margaret with an emphasis her actions did not endorse, for she did not pull away from him. She allowed herself the luxury of realizing that here, unsuspected and unsought, was one who wanted her. It was a rich experience. Margaret could not remember feeling wanted just for herself. It surprised her to realize now, that at this moment she knew the greatest peace Maryland had yet offered her. 'It's so very strange, so contrary,' she told herself, 'why do I reject it?'

Two

WINTER evenings which Giles did not spend at St. Gabriel's with Leonard, who held him in high regard, or with Secretary John Lewger and his wife Anne (privately, Giles considered Lewger an ineffectual man not wholly capable of the high post to which Cecilius had appointed him), were taken up with plans and designs of his own for the "Manor of Kent Fort." He would show Margaret and Mary how to plan on the grand scale!

Current troubles with hostile Indians, causing grave anxiety in many hearts, left Giles unmoved. His days and nights were pre-occupied with his own interests. Fulke, reluctant heir of Larke Stoke and the title, often wondered if he might abdicate his position in favor of his more worldly and aggressive brother. He would dearly like to send for Cecilia and his children and end his days in the peace and plenty of Maryland. During that first winter he once mentioned the possibility to Giles who roared with laughter at the idea.

"What!" he exploded, "give up Maryland freedom for a title that is pure brass as long as the holder remains a Roman Catholic? Ridiculous!"

The fact was the Brents were fast becoming pillars of the colony. Mary's ready discernment of the good in others, her charm and docility won all who knew her. Margaret's keen mind, spontaneous humor and exuberant appreciation of her new freedom all contributed to make her an invigorating companion. True, some of the more conservative gentlewomen shied from her discerning tongue; but on the other hand Father White's apparent as well as spoken appreciation of her judgment and his enthusiasm for her fine qualities plus Leonard Calvert's evident esteem, all combined to put Margaret forward from the outset as a leader.

Giles was generally liked too, now sharing the honors formerly reserved solely for Captain Cornwaleys. Giles had much in common with the latter, including his military genius, his sound common sense and zeal for the interests of the people. Fulke was popular for his slow, deliberate manner, his sterling gentlemanliness, his generous friendship.

Roused at last from the winter lull with the coming of the early spring, the pace of colonial life became noticeably accelerated. The time for the February Assembly was not far off; this would have to be immediately followed by the spring planting. Early in the month John Lewger administered the oath to Giles and installed him not only as a member of the Council, but, at the direction of the Lord Baltimore, as treasurer of the Province as well. Another was sworn in to the Council, one Thomas Greene, a neighboring landholder. Greene was a mild, indecisive man whose vacillating quality was ever a sharp annoyance to Giles. As a result of Cornwaleys' frequent absence from St. Maries this spring, occasioned by the restlessness of unfriendly Indians, another appointment came to Giles. He was commissioned Captain of the military forces of the City. He did not assume this responsibility half-heartedly. Once a month, and on holy days as well, he trained and instructed all males, able to bear arms, in the art and discipline of war. He made a survey of the arms and ammunition in every household. Where these were found insufficient he had the power to impose a maximum fine of thirty pounds of tobacco.

Before Giles realized it the day was at hand for the February Assembly. He was on Kent, supervising the initial work on Kent Fort Manor. On the 24th he set out for St. Maries, but adverse winds hampered him. On the 25th he arrived, late for the Assembly, and was fined twenty pounds of tobacco. Captain Cornwaleys was also late, and fined. But the important business of the Assembly did not get under way until the following Thursday.

By then Margaret decided she, too, would attend, as a spectator, naturally. Even though she was an "Independent Adventurer" she expected no "voice or vote." The day was clear and sunny. As she rode down Middle Street towards the Fort where the Assembly must meet until the contemplated Town House was a reality, her heart beat happily. This was freedom.

The business of the Assembly was the second reading of laws for the government of Maryland. They would be read a third time on still another day and then sent to the Lord Baltimore for approval. By virtue of new powers which Cecilius had granted, Leonard would now assent in his brother's name to all acts of the Assembly.

Prior to the important business of law-making, however, a criminal case was tried before the members of the Council, who then were Leonard, John Lewger, The Captain; Giles and Thomas Greene. The case was that of an indentured servant, John Richardson, charged by William Brough, his master, with "self-kidnapping" and theft.

As Margaret listened to the evidence she decided there was no question about the man's guilt. The Council reached the same conclusion. Then came the question of punishment.

"What think you a fit punishment?" asked Leonard of the Council.

'Good gracious,' thought Margaret to herself. 'This could be dangerous to justice. Fancy such a question in an English Court.' Yet she knew as well as every soul present that until a code of laws was adopted, such details must rest upon the good judgment of the people.

To her great surprise it was the mild-mannered John Lewger who moved the defendant be whipped "three several times." But the others did not wholly agree.

Then Thomas Greene rose in his place at the Council table and addressing Leonard in a tone of agitation, said, "Mr. President, it is my judgment that John Richardson should be hanged."

A loud murmur of protest rumbled through the Assembly.

Giles stood up. Margaret held her breath. This brother was beginning to feel powerful. Would he be ruthless, too?

"Your Excellency," said Giles, "I deem it sufficient to whip the guilty one severely."

"On one condition," broke in Captain Cornwaleys unceremoniously, "only if he is sorry for his deed." Another murmur floated over the Assembly, but now its note was approval.

Then Leonard rose.

"John Richardson," he said, directly addressing the defendant, "by

your example, if it were generally followed here, you have committed a serious offense against the domestic peace of this province. It is the decision of this court that you be laid in irons and whipped three several times severely."

Margaret shuddered. Richardson noticeably paled as he was led away. Then the Assembly was adjourned until two o'clock in the afternoon.

At her invitation, Margaret spent the intervening time with Anne Lewger, who found Mrs. James Neale waiting to see her at home. This was Margaret's first meeting with Mrs. Neale. The lady asked prying questions. She made arbitrary statements. She did not approve of the ladies of the colony attending the sessions of the Assembly. This young wife of James Neale could not forget that, prior to coming out to Maryland, she had been a lady-in-waiting to Henrietta Maria. This ever-blooming recollection laid the foundation for her superior airs and pontifical pronouncements, making her an insufferable bore.

Before two o'clock, Margaret and Anne returned to the Fort only to be advised that further sessions of the Assembly would be held in the manor house of St. John's.

"That is His Lordship's manor, isn't it?" Margaret asked Anne as they about-faced their horses and retraced their way.

"Yes," replied Anne, sadly, "it has been ready all of three years and still Cecilius and milady Anne do not come out."

"But they have every intention of coming," Margaret reassured her cheerfully. "It is only a matter of time. When enemies like Clayborne appear before the Privy Council —"

"Clayborne!" interjected Anne in a tone of utter repugnance.

"You can understand, I am sure, why Cecilius must wait until all these troublesome matters are settled."

"Meanwhile Leonard has prepared a home to welcome his brother and his family, and here it stands, a lonely shell, a house without a soul."

They settled themselves quietly with the few other interested spectators at one end of St. John's hall, a room no more than fifteen by thirty feet. Except for the clerk, who was not a voting member of the Assembly, there were only seventeen souls: Leonard and

Lewger and the four Councillors, nine men representing the hundreds of St. Maries, St. Georges, St. Michaels, Matapanient and Kent; and two freemen from St. Maries who had not assented to the selection of burgesses from the Hundred and took advantage of the alternative privilege to represent themselves.

Seventeen men to draw a code of laws by which seven-hundred-odd souls would be governed. Margaret was absorbed.

The rapt attention given the clerk as he read the long code interested her almost as much as the code itself. These seventeen men of one nationality, though of different faiths, by privilege of a royal charter had written these laws. Once they had heard them through. The second reading, Margaret suspected, might be attended by restlessness — coughing, shifting about of feet and chairs; but not so. The entire Assembly listened as intently as Margaret herself, who was hearing them for the first time. This fact impressed her greatly.

Considering the ulterior motive behind the very founding of the colony, the first proposal in the code was significant:

Holy Church within this province shall have all her rights, liberties, and immunities safe, whole and inviolable in all things.

'Why,' thought Margaret, 'that is Magna Charta all over again. And here in Maryland when it is no longer applied at home.'

Margaret looked about, eager to see the reaction of the Jesuits to this first provision in Maryland's code of laws. But missing them, she quickly recalled that they would not be found here. For the moment she had forgotten that the priests in Maryland had, from the first, begged to be excused from sitting in the Assembly or contributing in any manner to the drawing of the laws for the Colony. They had insisted their single purpose was to minister to the faithful and save souls: mundane legislation was beyond the scope of their vocation.

Now she heard the clerk, Mr. Briton, reading again:

All inhabitants shall take the oath of Allegiance to His Majesty. . .

The Lord Proprietor shall have all his rights and prerogatives. . .

"Everything in proper order of importance," whispered Margaret to Anne Lewger. The Secretary's wife nodded smilingly and Margaret realized then, inasmuch as Anne's husband had transcribed these laws, that probably their appropriate arrangement had already been observed by her.

Again Mr. Briton was reading:

The inhabitants shall have all their rights and liberties according to the great charter of England.

As the clerk's voice droned on, specifically detailing the particulars of each law, Margaret felt no regret at being in Maryland, save the absence from her family. If all "rights and liberties" were here to be a fact, Maryland would be England at its best.

The afternoon wore on. Margaret grew a little weary. As dusk dimmed St. John's hall, candles set in brass brackets, which were hung on the walls, were lighted. Probably because of the indecision of the Council earlier in the day about the punishment for John Richardson, Margaret's ears became keen again, as she heard Mr. Briton enunciate the proposed punishments for crimes.

Treason — to conspire the death of the King, Queen or son and heir — counterfeit of privy seal — or coin — to join any foreign state a professed enemy of His Majesty — or join any confederation of Indians — for invasion of this province, to be punished by drawing, hanging and quartering of a man; burning of a woman — offender's blood to be corrupted — forfeit of all lands — or by punishment of death upon a lord of a manor by beheading.

For felonies — death without benefit of clergy — manslaughter — to die by hanging unless he can read, then the loss of hand, or burned in forehead and forfeit all lands. Trial by jury for treason and felony — criminal cases by the court.

In spite of her interest, Margaret had almost gone off to sleep. Mr. Briton's voice had no color, no change of tone or pace to keep her awake. The legal details grew wearisome. The room was close and the many tapers gave off a noxious odor. But now all was ominously quiet and she roused to wide-awakeness.

What had happened?

She had not seen the breathless messenger come in, interrupt the proceedings to speak in hissing whispers to Leonard. But she did see Leonard convey the message in like manner to his Councillors. She noted that immediately they understood, each face assumed an expression of shock and apprehension. When Margaret saw Giles' face evidence the same reaction, she knew the information was serious, for Giles was not emotional. His reaction alarmed her.

Grasping Anne Lewger's arm, she begged "What is it? What can the matter be?"

"I'm sure I don't know," responded Anne uneasily. "My John is plainly worried. Hush! The Governor is going to speak."

His face grave and sombre, Leonard arose.

"The Lieutenant General of this province requires all who can conveniently do so to repair at once to the Fort for the night," he began in a voice of authority. "There will be exceptions, of course," he went on, "in the case of those men who have wives and children now left unprotected. But the ladies, especially—" he paused to stress the designation and held the pause long enough to find Margaret's eyes, "will please go with all speed to the Fort." He paused again. "I am not aware," he resumed in a moment, "how great our danger may be, or indeed, if there is any danger at all; but the new governor of Virginia, Sir William Berkeley, has just sent me advice that Opechancanough, brother and successor to Powhatan, has descended upon his colony and massacred five hundred of our Virginia neighbors."

Three

NATURALLY, Margaret's first thought was for Mary.

Terror gripped her heart. With a sudden dash, verging on panic, she tripped and stumbled her way from St. John's hall, bolted through the door and ran to her horse as fast as the encumbrance of her long, heavy coat would permit. With a wrench and a jerk she untethered the astonished animal, mounted him with a bound lacking in all feminine decorum, turned him about and urged him to speed. Startled by this treatment from his usually gentle rider, and as though he shared her alarm and terror, the horse galloped up Middle Street, now quite dark, at a furious pace. At the Hawley gate, Margaret drew the reins with a jolt, dismounted and left the amazed and breathless animal to stable himself.

Not until she was halfway up the path leading to the door of the house, did she pause to listen to the persistent voice within herself which all along had been demanding, 'What are you going to tell Mary? The truth will frighten her to death!'

For an instant Margaret stood still.

'What am I going to tell her?' she wondered.

Before she could answer this question, the upper portion of the door opened, throwing a square of mellow light on to the white oyster-shell path some feet ahead of her. And framed in this opening Margaret saw the form of her sister, one hand on the door jam, the other on the sill of the lower section. Her hair was awry, and with nervous, jerky motions, Mary peered into the darkness. Margaret sensed instantly that something was amiss; that Mary was already frightened.

She began to run up the path, calling, "Oh! Mary, I am home again!" She tried hard to sound normally cheerful.

"Margaret?" called Mary. There was a sob in her voice.

Margaret paused to gather up her skirts that she might run the faster.

"Margaret, Margaret, is it really Margaret?" called Mary hysterically.

"Yes, dear, coming!" replied her sister.

Reassured, Mary opened the rest of the door and came stumbling forward in the shaft of light to meet Margaret, who caught her in a firm embrace just as she was about to take a headlong fall. Her sister's whole body trembled, and Margaret could feel her pounding heart.

"What is it, what is it?" demanded Margaret anxiously.

"Indians!" breathed Mary into her coat, "Indians, and — "

"Good God!" exclaimed Margaret.

She forced Mary away from her at arm's length.

"Are you all right?" she cried. "Are you hurt?"

"Yes, no," answered Mary, "I am not touched."

"Thank God," said Margaret, "you are only frightened."

"Oh! He was so hideous!" trembled Mary. "He was looking for Leonard. The Tayac sent him with a message. But — "

"Leonard, eh?" There was alarm in Margaret's voice.

"I shall never forget him," Mary went on, her voice trembling with terror. "His forehead was blue and he had a copper fish tied on it, and great red rings painted around his eyes. His chin was all red, and he had streaks and streaks of white and yellow and green paint from the corners of his awful mouth to his ears. . . ."

"Did Eleanor see him?" demanded Margaret, realizing it was quite an unimportant question.

Mary did not reply and as they came into the house, Margaret saw she was again fighting to control her tears, for she stood dumbly looking at Margaret, biting her lips and clenching her small fists.

"How is Eleanor?" Margaret pursued, as she took off her coat and went to hang it on a peg by the door.

When Mary again did not reply, Margaret turned to look at her.

She was standing at the entrance of Eleanor's cubicle bedroom to the left of the living room. Without uttering a word she beckoned to her sister. Puzzled, Margaret hurried across the room. At the sight which greeted her as she reached Mary's side, she halted abruptly. For the moment she was speechless.

Then, slowly, she entered, paused at the bedside, knelt, blessed herself, and at last with a sob in her voice, she cried, "Oh, Eleanor, darling!"

Eleanor was dead.

Margaret looked at Mary. Plainly her eyes asked 'Indians?' But Mary shook her head.

"She grew worse about mid-afternoon — so weak. She wanted to know why it was growing dark so early! Oh, if only she had kept one servant. I had no one to send for Sir Thomas — and then, she begged . . ." Mary paused to control her tears.

"Yes, dear?"

"She begged and begged me to get Father White. But how could I leave her to die alone?"

"I know," said Margaret, now looking at Eleanor.

"I did spy a passerby, and begged him to go for Father, but . . ." Mary bit her lips.

"I know," said Margaret, dully, "he came too late."

"Only by a few moments!" Mary made no effort now to control her tears.

Neither of them had heard hoofbeats pounding up Middle Street. Now a loud, imperative knock at the door startled them. The clinking of the latch brought Margaret to her feet. Again her heart froze. The Virginia Indians! Mary! What to say now, in perhaps this instant before a violent death? In her frantic distraction she did not think that a savage would not bother to knock for admission. Mary started to go, but instantly Margaret blocked her way.

"Stay here!" she ordered fiercely. "Stay here with Eleanor!"

When Margaret reached the living room she saw Leonard enter. So great was her relief that he was not a painted, leering, blood-thirsty savage that she almost sank to the floor — probably would have if he had not rushed to her side and scooped her in his arms.

"You must go to the Fort," he said close to her ear. "I have the whole colony to protect. You must —"

"Oh, it's you, Leonard," said Mary now coming around the chimney. She blushed as she saw her sister in his arms.

It was only the force of Margaret's strong will which made him turn his eyes back to hers where with understanding intuition he

read what Margaret could not then speak aloud, 'Don't tell Mary about the massacre!' As he released Margaret he was at his wits end how to accomplish his mission without letting Mary know.

Mary offered a momentary diversion. She said, softly, "Come, Leonard — " and led him to the cubicle.

He took in the fact at a glance and, visibly shocked, he, too, paused a moment to pray. The silence thus established was broken abruptly by the voice of Fulke coming from the outer room. No one had heard him arrive.

"Hello, I say," he was calling, "are you three girls here?"

"Yes, yes," answered Margaret rushing out to him. But this time she was not successful in suppressing the news she did not wish Mary to hear.

"Well, come along this instant," Fulke commanded, as Mary followed her sister into the room. "You must all go to the Fort!"

Mary's eyes widened and her breath came quickly. "Why?" she demanded apprehensively, her voice quavering.

"Good God!" exclaimed Fulke. "Haven't you told them?" he asked Margaret.

"Indians! It must be Indians!" cried Mary.

"It is," said Leonard quietly, as he stood unnoticed behind her.

"I knew it would come to this," cried Mary. "Margaret, why have we come here? And I can nevermore leave this place," she concluded, the memory of the *Charity* momentarily taking first place in her recollection of horrors.

"There is no worry now," comforted Margaret, putting her arm about her.

"No worry? Fantastic!" protested Fulke. "Come, get Eleanor and the three of you be off."

"Mary has had a bad day," put in Margaret. "I should never have gone to the Assembly and left her."

"Quite right," said Fulke sternly, "the Assembly is no place for — But there, come now, the three of you, or Mary may have had her *last* bad day."

"Fulke!" remonstrated Margaret with fire in her eye. Even in the strain of the moment she knew resentment over his veiled criticism. "You take Mary to the Fort, and at once," she commanded

him then. "Eleanor died this afternoon while Mary was here alone with her."

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Fulke.

Margaret meanwhile was wrapping Mary's cloak about her and setting her fur-trimmed, velvet bonnet on her head, carefully tying the ribbons under her chin. "There," she said when she had finished, "Fulke will see that you are safe. You march right off with him."

"But the Indians," protested Mary.

"Sometimes they go to sleep at night," said Margaret managing a wry smile. "Fulke," she continued, turning abruptly to her brother, "Mary must have rest, a very good rest. Nothing must disturb or distress her. Now, off with you both!"

"You are coming, too," ordered Fulke.

"Yes, yes, of course," said Margaret, hurrying her brother and sister out the door. "Later."

"See that she does," said Fulke to Leonard.

"The Fort sounds like war to me," Mary said as Fulke led her down the dark path. Mary was his favorite sister and he was glad to have her safely under his protection. Margaret had a place in his heart, too, but she seemed constantly to flounce around in it, in a most annoying fashion.

If Margaret could have done so, she would have hustled Leonard off as well, for she was determined to stay the night with the dead. But Leonard loved her and was not easily dismissed.

"You cannot stay here alone," he insisted.

"Giles will be along soon," parried Margaret.

"Giles is on patrol with the Militia," advised Leonard. "Come, come, I cannot linger here. You must come with me, now!"

"People do not 'must' me," retorted Margaret. "You forget Eleanor," she added reproachfully.

"Until morning the body will be quite safe — "

"Of course," snapped Margaret, "for I shall be here with it."

Leonard grew impatient. He was torn between love and duty. Duty lay at the report centers waiting for the patrols which Giles and Cornwaleys had organized to scout for the possible approach of the enemy. Right now he should be at St. Gabriel's to receive

reports from those scouting south at Mattapan Street. Perhaps even this instant, one was searching for him. What to do with the stubborn Margaret who seemed determined to remain here alone?

"No use pretending," he sternly told her now, "you know you are afraid. You nearly fainted when I came in."

For answer Margaret stared at him icily. She was afraid. But she was furious with Leonard for mentioning it. She said nothing.

"Where's your cloak?" demanded Leonard then, but seeing it on the bench by the hearth where Margaret had dropped it, he got it and held it up behind her.

"Put your arms in," he ordered.

Margaret turned around facing him.

"I am staying the night here."

"You're coming with me!" commanded Leonard, his cheeks flushed with anger.

"I will not!" cried Margaret, stamping her foot. She was angry enough, but too proud to cry.

"As Governor of this Province — " began Leonard.

"I defy the Governor of this Province!" snapped Margaret through clenched teeth.

With that, Leonard threw the coat over her shoulders and before she realized what had happened, he opened the door, picked her up as though her weight were no more than that of a child, and carried her out into the night.

"I'll scream," threatened Margaret at last. "Put me down, put me down," she cried, beating Leonard's back and shoulders with her fists.

"Scream!" advised Leonard.

Margaret struggled, but Leonard's arms were strong and rigid. She knew then the odds were all against her. He had almost reached his horse. But she had one weapon left. She began to cry softly.

Whether from surprise that this feminine failing should overcome the staunch and willful Margaret, or because he thought the tears an indication of submission is hard to say, but the result was that Leonard instantly put her down. No sooner did she feel the firm ground under her feet than her tears stopped and she ran from him, as fast as she could go, back to the house. Leonard remained

where she had left him, watching her intently. Then slowly he walked up the path. But Margaret had had ample advantage. Gaining the entrance she carefully bolted the door this time, though only the lower two-thirds. When Leonard reached the house, Margaret, still breathless, was leaning out the upper opening.

"Please, Leonard," she begged now between short gasps, "please let me stay here. I want to stay. Really, I am not too afraid."

Leonard was short of patience. For an instant he looked at her, realizing he was helpless to dissuade her. Then he turned abruptly, and without a word, left her standing there.

Margaret felt strangely frustrated. The victory was too easy, — humiliating. Her heart told her to call Leonard back before it was too late, but her pride refused. Now she heard his horse gallop off into the night.

Alone at last, she was afraid.

"Always the impulsive fool," she scolded herself, "acting on impulse, repenting at leisure."

But it was not until some few hours later that she could permit herself the leisure to repent. In the meanwhile she must prepare Eleanor for burial.

Her sad task completed at last, she lit two candles, placing one at the head and the other at the foot of the bier. Then taking a stool nearby, all the rest of the night through Margaret alternated between prayer and meditation. She could not remember when she had been so completely alone. This was a new experience — a luxury. She had time to meditate.

'How many chapters make a life,' she thought, and felt without bitterness or regret that hers would never have one entitled 'Marriage.'

Now she thought of Leonard. Of her foolish, absurd, ridiculous behavior. She felt ashamed to face him. What a stupid, undignified spectacle she had made of herself!

She looked at Eleanor.

Her final chapter had been written. Her book of life was closed. Even now her soul was rendering an account to God, and Eleanor could not alter one recorded fact. It was too late.

Not once that long night through, such was the luxury of unaccustomed solitude, did Margaret recall the threatened danger

to the colony. A "general examination of conscience" mercifully absorbed her. She felt her life bereft of profit and realized with alarm that the length of her own probation on earth was uncertain. Were she now in Eleanor's place what account could she render to God for the life He had given her? She realized a joy through her sorrow, and gratitude that she still lived and could make amendment. As she stood off to look impartially at herself she formed many resolutions. She would apologize the instant she saw Leonard.

She did not know a guard stood outside the door of the house. A man, who could ill be spared, sent by Leonard from the Fort.

In the comparative safety of daylight, Leonard brought Anne Lewger and Rose Fenwick the following morning to relieve Margaret at her vigil. He was prepared to meet the same stormy petrel he had left the night before, but instead Margaret now meekly asked him to take her to Mary at the Fort.

Leonard helped her mount the mare. She put her hand on his arm. "I am so very sorry, Leonard, and ashamed," she said quietly, "miserably, miserably ashamed."

For a moment he looked at her in wonderment. What an enigma women were, especially such an one as Margaret. He smiled at her, confidence and tenderness returning simultaneously.

"Think no more of it," he said in a masterly way, "you were nervous, upset and unstrung. . . ."

On any other occasion Margaret would have resented such an inventory of feminine attributes applied to herself; but now in her new humility, she said, "I acted like a spoiled child. Why don't you speak the truth?"

They turned their horses west on Middle Street. Margaret was anxious to rejoin Mary. But now Leonard did not urge speed. The air was crisp, clear and chilly. He thought Margaret looked tired, forgetting she had not slept the night through. Last night the tenderness he had felt for her had been almost smothered by her provoking obstinacy. Now he supposed his firmness once, for all time, had subdued Margaret's fire and defiance — that now he could mold her will to his. She was a different person this morning.

He rode closely by her side.

"Margaret," he began.

She looked at him.

"Don't you see now. . . ."

"See what?" she asked quizzically.

"Why I must . . . why I want . . . why . . ." He looked at her again. "Don't you?" he pleaded.

"I don't understand you," said Margaret, candidly.

"Good Lord!" exploded Leonard. "I risk the colony's safety to protect you. Spend precious moments to urge you to seek safe harbor; you, just one individual soul. I put my love for you before my duty, and you say you don't understand. By all the Saints . . ."

"Oh," interrupted Margaret. "I'm sorry. I thought, well — I thought that must be over, after my behavior last night. I did not think . . ."

" . . . that I could still love you?" finished Leonard, his tone mellow again with gentleness. "What a shabby love that would be, Margaret."

He brought his horse to a standstill and halted hers. Then, in the very center of Middle Street, on the chill morning in early March, a sharp wind whipping about them, he urged Margaret to make up her mind, and Margaret fought against telling him she had already done so.

"Say you will marry me," he urged.

"You hasten things so," complained Margaret.

Leonard was patient. "I have told you I would wait. But can we not have an understanding? A pledge between us?"

"I could not — I — Oh! Leonard, you will not understand." She searched for a plausible excuse which would avoid unkind truth. "It is Mary," she substituted, "we're like twins. We could not be separated."

Leonard laughed, as though he knew this would not stand in their way. "Too bad," he said, "but a man takes only one wife."

"Of course," agreed Margaret, preoccupied. "But I have not thought of marriage. Our future . . ."

"Look here," interrupted Leonard now very seriously. "There is a most important aspect to marriage which I have been taking for

granted. Perhaps I should find out, now. You talk as though it did not exist." He brought his horse closer to hers. "Margaret," he asked, "do you love me?"

Inwardly Margaret wanted to smile that Leonard had taken this for granted. What made men so sure of themselves? But she did not smile. She looked at the ground in mild confusion. Of course, this "love" was the whole point. She might have known Leonard would expose it. Now what to tell him? Above all she did not want deliberately to hurt him. If only he would think the thing through and come to the obvious conclusion without words about it. Impatient for her answer, however, Leonard only knew a keen annoyance that Margaret seemed to be studying each dry blade of grass, each pebble and clod of frozen earth. At last she decided to temporize.

"I could not be sure," she said, as though there had been no intervening pause since the question.

"Apparently not," said Leonard a little coldly, "not when you consider marriage against the Freehold, and Mary's companionship dominates your own will. Love, usually, is a roughshod rider with one objective."

He was quite right, naturally, but the way he spoke made Margaret feel as though she was being firmly, though gently, discharged from a position she should be qualified to fill but for which she had failed to meet the test.

"You have said," she heard him ask now, "that you want to contribute to the building of this colony. Since you are neither carpenter nor mason, how do you propose to do it?"

They had begun to walk their horses. Margaret darted him a swift glance. Her temper rose, but she overcame it this time. She took up the challenge.

"I propose to do it with my mind," she told him, stressing the tool, "first by establishing a home where speech and conscience are free. Then by encouraging others to the maintenance of the principles upon which Cecilius has built Maryland: tolerance, justice, integrity. . . ."

Leonard stared at her.

"Stuff and nonsense!" he objected. "Idealistic," he went on

crisply, "but you have boarded the wrong ship. What can a woman do without a husband? Why do you flaunt tradition? Why do you toss aside your high privilege as a woman?"

"Think you that woman has only one privilege?" Margaret blazed, her eyes flashing defiance. "I might start a school," she went on, picking the idea at random. "I could make a good contribution by educating the children at St. Maries. I could teach them the ideals of freedom, justice, charity, duty. . . ."

The look in Leonard's eyes stopped her. 'He does care,' she said to herself. 'I am hurting him!'

Leonard took advantage of her pause.

"Margaret, Margaret," he pleaded, "why not marriage and your own children to whom you may properly give these guiding ideals? They may be fruitless unless given to youth with their mother's milk."

Margaret saw she must tell him the truth.

Now her voice was maternal. "I have reminded you before that I am your senior by a good half dozen years," she said gently, "and should I marry at all, Leonard, it would be important to me that the ages be reversed. It is so much more fitting that a woman's protector should be her senior. . . ."

"Not if she loves him," insisted Leonard dismally. "You are hedging."

"I love you, Leonard," Margaret went on as though there had been no interruption. She did not see Leonard turn quickly to look at her, for her gaze was straight ahead. "I love you," she went on, "just as I love Giles and Fulke and William. . . ."

". . . and Richard, and Edward, and George, your brothers," finished Leonard, bitterly.

Margaret's eyes met his then. She wanted to cry. She had hurt him deeply.

They rode on in silence.

When they had almost reached the Fort, Leonard spoke, more as though he was thinking aloud, than to her directly. "I suppose," he mused somewhat bitterly, "love accepts God's will, with love!"

Some moments later they rode into the stockade. Leonard looked about the entrance for his groom. Accidentally Margaret

met his eyes and knew that now he looked right through her.

"You will want a warm drink after this chilly ride," he said matter of factly. "I will see that you have it promptly."

Mary and Captain Cornwaleys were coming out to meet them. As though she had not thought of it before, Margaret realized with some annoyance that the Captain had been much in the company of her sister. Margaret did not share the community's unqualified admiration for him. Her sixth sense told her to be cautious. Suppose Mary wanted to marry him?

Four

EVERY male in the colony who attended Eleanor Hawley's requiem, kept one hand on his gun. A guard, under the command of Giles, was stationed around the little Chapel and the adjacent burying ground.

When the grave had been filled and covered with evergreen boughs, the mourners paused at Eleanor's house on their way home, where Margaret and Mary, with the aid of their own servants, had prepared the usual funeral feast. In spite of the tense state of the City, due to the Virginia massacre, the girls had been able to amass a repast worthy of both Eleanor and Jerome Hawley, who had no surviving kin in the colony. The guests were some hours in consuming the banquet and discussing the merits of the deceased.

The Indian, who had so frightened Mary the night of Eleanor's death, had come to bring Leonard the message that the Tayac, Emperor of the Piscataways, at Patuxent, would welcome the "great white father" and desired Father White to come among his people.

At the first opportunity during the breakfast following the requiem which he had offered, Father White asked Leonard to secure permission from the Council for him to accept the summons.

"Let us discuss the matter after breakfast," Leonard suggested.

"I will be greatly obliged, my son," replied Father White, who approached each new venture with alacrity, and whose mission to the natives was his most ardent concern.

Leonard had a reverential love for Father White. His cultured, learned mind was stimulating; his holiness was radiated by his cheerfulness. Leonard was not aware of them all, but those mortifications which the Father practiced openly, such as his abstinence,

appalled the younger man, who usually chaffed at the minor inconveniences of his own mode of life. Leonard had never heard Father White complain, in sickness or in health. And he knew, should the Council still advise against the Father's contemplated visit to the Piscataways, the faithful priest would submit without complaint, thereby fulfilling the obligation of obedience to a conscientious civil authority.

Mary's voice interrupted Leonard's reflections.

"Father Fisher," she said, passing him a well-filled plate, "I hope you will stop with us now for your meals. I know Eleanor took great delight in serving our 'shepherds.' "

As Father Fisher smiled a thank you, Mary turned to Father White. "Nothing at all, Father?"

"No, my dear, thank you," he replied.

"Oh, me! I do wish just once you would permit yourself — consider your health, Father."

"Once would be fatal, my child. It would not rest at once, but be twice, thrice, then — then soon enough eating for the pleasure of eating would become a preoccupation."

"I shall accept, Mistress Mary," put in Father Fisher now to divert attention from his Superior who was obviously slightly embarrassed. It was not easy, he realized, for the layman to comprehend the spirit of mortification and renunciation which permeated the soul of an ardent religious. He knew that Father White took but one meal a day, that in the evening and then only bread and water. "Our mission here," he continued, liberally serving himself some gooseberry jam, "is especially blessed by willing souls like yourselves, so anxious to provide our needs, and providing so abundantly."

"Our City was indeed blessed with the pure and generous soul who has so recently left us," spoke up Father White reflectively. "Eleanor Hawley came to this colony with more than a woman's courage, and with nary a complaint she bore all the difficulties and inconveniences which first beset us here. She was a soul much given to prayer," he went on, as all gave him close attention, "and was most anxious for the salvation of her neighbors. In herself and in her domestic concerns she gave perfect example. While living she was ever partial to our Society of Jesus, and the good

Captain Cornwaleys, who has opened her will, informs me she has been generous to it in dying. Her virtues were many, her example notable, her charity to the sick unfailing — may our dear Lord give her His peace."

"Amen," said Leonard.

Rose Fenwick, Henrietta Neale, Virlinda Stone and several other ladies gently wept into their handkerchiefs. Not so the Brent sisters. Father's eulogy had fallen on their ears as a challenge, a noble inspiration to "go and do likewise." Mary approached Father White slowly, as the tension relaxed, and voices began to stir again with spontaneous chatter from scattered groups.

"If only I could fill Eleanor's place," she sighed, "but I have so little courage."

"Courage is a natural gift," Father White answered, "nor is it poured only in one mold. Supernaturalized by our Holy Faith it may carry us to the uttermost lengths for the glory of God."

"God is generous," agreed Mary.

"He takes with one hand and gives with another," added Father White.

"And he has given Maryland two courageous, exemplary and inspiring women," interrupted Father Fisher. "I know whereof I speak."

Margaret and Mary were covered with confusion and rejoiced that Leonard interrupted at that moment.

"For five long years," said Leonard, looking directly at Margaret with a light in his eyes which too clearly betrayed his feeling, "I have promised myself that when the Brents came to our Province an abundance of God's blessings would rain upon us."

Margaret was embarrassed. She read the light in Leonard's eyes and shrank from its implication. He must not love her, she desired only his friendship. Her face flushed. Nervously her hands rearranged her neckerchief and smoothed her hair. Leonard and the priest watched her, their gaze added to her confusion. She must say something — what? When she spoke her words were cold, stilted, impersonal:

"One faces sad disillusionment," she said, trying to smile but only achieving a grimace, "if one indulges in idle fancy — it distorts the virtues of a friend and the vices of a foe."

Leonard looked at her, visibly sighed, and turned away.

"If you are ready, Father," he said, "we may as well take our leave."

"Quite ready, my son."

A little later, as the two rode down Middle Street, the priest said, "You were quite right. We are blessed by the presence of the Brents."

"You heard what Margaret said," reminded Leonard despondently. "It sounded like something written in a dull, pious book."

Father White looked at him keenly. So! After a pause he suggested. "Mistress Margaret was embarrassed. Only the Pharisee seeks the adulation of his fellowman."

Leonard said nothing. Both rode on in silence for a few moments.

"Would you wish that Mistress Margaret had a thirst for flattery?" asked Father White, presently.

"I did not flatter," defended Leonard. "I spoke the truth, and from my heart."

"But before a company," explained Father White. "Had you been alone . . ."

"She would have denied it still," cut in Leonard.

"Quite possibly," agreed Father White, "but charmingly — er — not so pedantically."

"Jove!" exclaimed Leonard brightening, "I never thought of that. I believe you are right. I did embarrass her. I am a clumsy fool."

"No more so than the rest of us," retorted Father White. "You are wise to think well of Mistress Margaret. She is a lady of fine discernment. You can depend upon her; and if I were you, I would."

As they rode into St. Gabriel's, Duke, the shaggy setter which Margaret had brought to Leonard, came bounding out to meet them, alternately barking and yelping a greeting in the abandoned effervescence of puppyhood. Leonard, dismounting, reached out a hand to pet his dog but the puppy wanted to play. Grabbing his master's gauntlet glove, he jerked it from his hand and flinging

it over his head he ran wildly to pounce upon it as it fell to the ground. Retrieving his glove, Leonard led his guest into the house. Duke followed, of course.

As they settled themselves before the hearth, with a sigh of resignation the dog flumped down at Leonard's feet, his head on his forepaws, his eyes speaking one final plea for play instead of sleep.

"Of course, Father," Leonard began, "if Chitomachon, the Tayac, himself has sent for you, I have no doubt the Council will consent. But — "

"Oh, please," begged Father White, "do not delay me longer here."

"You have waited long and your patience . . ."

"We will pass over what is past, my son."

"You must be aware of the possible dangers," Leonard went on. But raising his hand slightly, Father White begged to speak.

"Dangers, yes," began the priest, "but in no greater degree than those faced by the Apostles. I am informed of the temper of these savages. I know even now those of our race lately captured in Virginia are probably suffering untold tortures, cruel deaths — may God pity them. And there, too, my son," he added, "I am informed after death the natives feast upon the corpses. It is frightful. Our mission . . ."

"I am not sure the Maryland natives do likewise," put in Leonard.

"Captain Fleet says not — except perhaps among the Susquehannocks," replied Father White.

"He has been most helpful to you?"

"That I cannot deny," admitted Father White a note of reserve in his voice. "He has taught me the dialects — he lived among the natives here for twenty years. . . ."

"Yet you mistrust him, Father. Why?"

"I have observed him to be a gentleman of expediency," replied the priest, carefully choosing his words. "He inclines to seemingly propitious winds. He does not altogether conceal his close association with William Clayborne who has shown such open animosity to us. But, nevertheless, to me the Captain has been most helpful."

Leonard nodded. "So?" he urged.

"In the matter of native languages and customs," enlarged Father White. "Through Captain Fleete I know I go among a savage people inclined to vices, but not too many; inclined to roam, but not too far; a people patient in trouble, slow to show strong emotions, usually docile, nor are they obstinate in assenting to truth when they understand it."

"Is that all?" asked Leonard, as Father White paused.

"Indeed, no," he replied. "Captain Fleete tells me these natives acknowledge one God in heaven, though they worship Him not. They have no belief in immortality, but they may be swayed by reason. They worship stones, herbs, trees, each one his own. They buy from their self-appointed seers interpretations of their dreams. Oh, my son," concluded the zealous priest, "our mission may convert a whole empire. Do not stay this great work longer, I beg you."

"I shall take the matter up with the Council tomorrow, Father," Leonard promised. "Come yourself, if you wish. At St. John's Manor, at ten o'clock."

Rising to go, Father White chuckled. "If I wish! Indeed!"

Leonard assisted him into his heavy coat. Duke stirred, inquisitively opening one eye, then closing it again to resume his slumber. It was not his master who was departing.

"God go with you, Father," said Leonard as he opened the door for the priest. "And your blessing, Father, please."

"Gladly, my son."

As Leonard knelt, Father White made the sign of the Cross above his head. ". . . et *Spirito Sancto*," he concluded.

When Leonard rose and shook his hand, Father White held him a moment.

"I daily ask God's blessing upon this good land, and you, our Governor. And mark my words, my son, if a time should come when none of your advisers seem wholly to comprehend a problem, confide it to the Mistress Margaret Brent. I have profound faith in her good judgment."

"And rightly," agreed Leonard, smiling. "I am glad we agree, Father. Good-day until tomorrow — and God bless you."

So it was that five years after his arrival, Father White began his mission among the Indians, even as his contemporary, Isaac Jogues, labored among the vicious Mohawks.

This year of 1639 was one of adjustment for the Brents, too. Giles moved to Kent Fort Manor, and his sisters to the Freehold. With the cooperation of Captain Cornwaleys, whose assistance Mary sought, Eleanor's small home was converted into a dispensary and refuge for the sick poor. Mary labored here each morning. Margaret, not to be outdone by her sister, developed her "random idea" and opened a school at Trinity Manor.

New settlers arrived at St. Maries with every ship. One of these brought a letter from Larke Stoke. It was from Elizabeth, addressed to Fulke. The four sadly surmised its message. "It was quite sudden," Elizabeth wrote sparingly, "Papa did not suffer. Cecilia and the children have joined us at the house, and anxiously await your return. All will welcome you. Anne resembles our sister Margaret more and more each day. You will have to be firm with her. William came home only a fortnight before Papa's fatal stroke."

So, in the summer of 1639, while Maryland was suffering a devastating drought, Fulke reluctantly returned to England to assume the title of Lord of Stoke and Admington and the remainder of his father's lands.

In the late fall of that year, Father White sent word to Leonard asking for corn to be sent to the Piscataways: the summer drought had ruined their crops, and their winter provisions would be inadequate. Leonard responded, assessing each landholder in proportion to his holdings and so saved the friendly natives from a season of hunger.

Towards the end of the year, in February, Giles was made Commander of Kent. Vincent Waynehouse was then civil governor of the Island. Though both he and Giles had one trait in common, their acquisitiveness, both harbored a mutual dislike for the other. Giles suspected Waynehouse of a *sub rosa* friendship with Clayborne, who continued to disturb the loyalty of the inhabitants and to connive with the Susquehannocks. Waynehouse, for his part, jealously resented Giles' appointment, seeing it as a potential threat to his own.

Early the following spring, Father White sent for Leonard. This time the Indian messenger knew his way to St. Gabriel's; he did not frighten Mary as he had the night of Eleanor's death.

Returning with him Leonard found Father White a guest in the "palace" of the Tayac in the village of Kittamaquaandi.

"Oh! So much have I to report!" greeted the Father, his face wreathed in smiles. "I scarce know where to begin. But there — most important is the fact that mine host Chitomachon requires to be baptized! He insists, and I concur, that the occasion be a gala one. If it please you, Leonard, he desires the Governor to be on hand and all the prominent persons of the colony."

"Bless you, Father," Leonard responded, his enthusiasm matching that of the priest, "you may depend upon us. We shall all be here in our most resplendent best."

"Good!" replied Father White, "And that reminds me, the Tayac desires to adopt our European mode of dress. Do you think you could acquire for him a garb like your own?"

"Um," smiled Leonard as his mind's eye pictured Chitomachon attired as a cavalier, "I think our good friend Cornwaleys might well spare a complete array."

"It must be complete," cautioned Father White, returning the smile. "Doublet and hose, shoes, too, with the very largest silver buckles procurable. Waistcoat and the finest linen ruffles, and a handsome stock. And last, but not least, a very broad hat with extravagant plumes."

"I will attend to it, Father. Do not concern yourself further."

"Good, good," assented Father White. "And now, there will be a special chapel erected for the occasion, the Tayac having already gone about the preliminaries. His sincerity is edifying."

"I am so happy your labors are meeting with such success," said Leonard.

"Yes, yes, God has blessed our mission," acknowledged Father White. "Not long since one of the braves was fatally injured and I would prepare him to meet Our Lord. The Emperor, himself, was my interpreter, and so faithful to my instruction that the injured one understood the message and required that I baptize him without delay. Then, behold, not long thereafter Chitomachon called all his people round about him." Father White's

face was illumined with joy as he went on. "He told them of the conversion of the one whom the Lord had so recently taken. He told them stones were unworthy of divine honors, the herbs and the trees were for their use, but not to be adored; that the Great Spirit, only, was to be adored and obeyed. After he had said this," the priest concluded, placing his hand on Leonard's arm, "he threw from him a stone which all the while he had held in his hand. More, as it struck the ground, the Tayac went quickly to the place where it had fallen and spurned it with his foot. All his people applauded this gesture. It was impressive, my son. So impressive that now I am hopeful this whole nation may be won to Christ, Our Lord."

"God has indeed blessed your labors, and I shall not stint in making the occasion of the Tayac's baptism one never to be forgotten. It shall live always, as a memorial to the zeal of our 'Apostle of Maryland.'"

"Tut, tut, my son, it is not for the glory of this world that **we** labor here."

Upon his return to St. Maries, Leonard spread abroad the news of the coming event. Captain Cornwaleys consented to supply the Emperor with his baptismal wardrobe, and Margaret and Mary also sent a gown and underclothing for his wife.

"What about his children?" Mary asked Leonard. "Should **we** send new clothes for them, too?"

Leonard laughed.

"I hardly think so," he replied, "for the children run naked until they are twelve, at least, and Chitomachon's oldest child is a daughter, barely seven."

"Has he no sons?" asked Margaret.

"Yes, a toddler and an infant at the breast," replied Leonard.

"Well, I do think the little girl should be clothed on this occasion," insisted Margaret.

"Better not," Leonard advised. "It is not wise to force our ways upon the natives. We do better to wait for them to adopt our customs of their own volition."

"But it is indecent for the children to go about naked — and boys and girls together," protested Mary.

"Indecent to **us**," Leonard agreed, "because the white man at-

tributes evil to nudity. The Indian looks upon it merely as a child's natural state."

"Well, since we are to witness this event," Margaret said then, "we can thank God that the Tayac has submerged his vanity and chosen to cover himself."

Late in June, Father White sent word to the Governor that all was in readiness, and the appointed day was the fifth of July. A large representation from St. Maries Hundred went to Kittamaquaandi for the event.

Principal among these, naturally, were the Governor, Mr. Secretary Lewger and Captain Cornwaleys. Also Thomas Greene of the Council and his wife, the Brent sisters, James and Henrietta Neale, Cuthbert and Rose Fenwick, and William and Virlinda Stone.

Sir Thomas and Lady Gerard represented St. Clement's Hundred, while from St. George's came Captain Henry Fleete. Giles came from Kent. Father Brock, S.J., lately arrived from the Continent and now Superior of the Maryland mission, journeyed from Matapanient.

Arriving at Kittamaquaandi, the assembly gathered at the chapel which Chitomachon had had constructed of bark by his skilled artisans.

He was an impressive and unusual sight in his cavalier's dress. In adopting this he had not foregone his usual facial adornment, so beneath the broad brimmed hat draped with a large plume, his bronzed face beamed. It was heavily painted with streaks of green, yellow and vermillion. His chin and forehead were a solid blue, and his hair was loose and scraggly, hanging as an untidy fringe beneath the hat. His wife, with her infant in her arms, wore a yellow and black striped silk which the Brent sisters had provided. Obviously she was most uncomfortable in the tight waist and snug bodice.

The fifth of July was a hot day. Although the trees overhanging the little chapel offered some deflection of the direct rays of the scorching sun, still the entire company suffered great discomfort; except the native children who, stark naked, were oblivious to the heat.

During the baptismal rites, one of these, the Emperor's daughter, came to stand between Margaret and Mary. She ran her filthy little hand admiringly over their dimity dresses and stared open mouthed at their shoes, their fingerless lace mitts, their wide-brimmed, embroidered hats. After this careful survey, she looked at each in turn and giggled aloud.

'What beautiful teeth,' Margaret thought.

'I should like to give that child a bath,' mused Mary, 'and a frock.'

Not only were Chitomachon and his Queen baptized, but also the King of the Anacostans, and Mosorcoques, Chitomachon's chief councillor.

In the afternoon Father White united the Emperor and his Queen in matrimony according to Christian rites. Then, as a final ceremony of this memorable day, a huge cross was carried by the Emperor and members of the Maryland Council, to a chosen spot before the chapel and there set into the ground while Father White lead in chanting the litany in honor of the Blessed Virgin.

Now the day was well spent, and the visitors, weary and wilted, began to disperse.

"Just think of the difference," said Mary as she and Margaret turned to leave the scene. "Here we are free to bring all to Christ while at home, to instruct one in our Holy Faith is an act of treason."

Margaret smiled her appreciation. She was very tired.

"Here comes Captain Cornwaleys," she said, nodding as he approached.

Mary smoothed her dress and ineffectively fanned herself with a lace handkerchief.

"May I escort you to the City?" asked the Captain of Mary only. He made a courtly bow as he spoke.

Mary looked at Margaret and blushed.

"Go along, dear," said Margaret, "Leonard will . . ."

But just then Leonard called her.

"A moment, Mistress Brent, please."

The three of them turned to face Leonard and Father White. The priest looked wan and weary after the arduous day. The

two were surrounded by the Tayac, his wife and the little girl who had joined the sisters earlier. Now she looked at them with cool appraisal.

Leonard turned to Margaret.

"The Tayac wishes us to take his daughter back to St. Maries," he said.

"Not without some clothes on," said Mary.

Leonard smiled at her.

"I have explained, being unmarried, that I could not give her a home. But the child, herself . . ." he paused, searching Margaret's face.

"Yes?" she prompted.

"Margaret, will you take her?"

"That little savage?" exclaimed Mary.

"The Emperor wants her instructed in our Faith and customs," explained Leonard, "he wants her reared in English ways. He wants us to adopt her."

"Oh, good gracious!" cried Mary in surprise.

"But Leonard," Margaret stalled, "why choose us?"

"The Emperor chose the Governor as being equal to him in rank," Leonard explained patiently, "and he thought, Margaret, that you were my wife."

Margaret dropped her eyes.

"It would be a splendid act of charity, Mistress Margaret," urged Father White.

"You must disabuse the Tayac's mind," Margaret told Leonard firmly.

"I have," he replied quickly, "but the Tayac sees this as no obstacle to his wish. He asks that you and I adopt little Mary Kittamaquaand."

Margaret was speechless.

It was Mary who spoke.

"It might not be a bad idea," she urged, perhaps motivated by her desire to bathe and dress the child. "The Freehold needs a child," she added, placing a hand on Margaret's arm.

Margaret looked at her.

In that moment both sisters realized how deeply they had missed their little sister Anne. Now Mary Kittamaquaand ran

to them, stopping before them so suddenly that a cloud of dust rose about her. She looked first at Mary, then at Margaret. Her eyes radiated excitement and delight. Grabbing Margaret's hand she tried to pull her away, pointing in the direction of St. Maries, and nodding her head up and down in a joyful, smiling affirmative.

As she checked the child with her free hand, Leonard noted Margaret's pained expression. She seemed torn between pity, desire and misgiving. She looked at him resignedly.

"Very well," she said simply.

Leonard sighed his relief as his eyes thanked her.

Father White smiled a blessing.

The Queen came forward, followed by the Tayac. She stared at her little seven-year-old daughter but showed no trace of emotion. The child, oblivious, was curiously examining Margaret's reticule. The Tayac expressed his appreciation with low bows and pleased grimaces. Involuntarily Mary shrank from him, but he did not notice her.

So it was, late that July evening, Margaret and Mary returned to the Freehold, now a family of three.

Giles, who would remain at the White House for a few days, regarded the little Indian Princess with marked interest.

"You have an heiress on your hands!" he said, absently rubbing his own hands together. "The eldest daughter of a native King. A Princess! One day she will be Queen of the Piscataways. Think of the land she will inherit!"

His breath whistled through his teeth as he relished this attractive thought.

Five

IN time to come Margaret would look back upon the two years following the adoption of Mary Kittamaquaand as the most serene of her Maryland experience. The middle of 1642 found her acclimated and usually content, except . . .

Now and then her mind would anxiously dwell upon disquieting news which came out of England. Figuratively she stopped her ears to it, but she could not stop her thoughts. She was socially popular, and her school was well attended. The business management of the Freehold, the exportation of their tobacco crops, her occasional appearances at the Provincial Court to collect a debt due herself, or Fulke whose interests she represented, absorbed much of her time. But in spite of these many preoccupations Margaret often knew moments of unexplainable restlessness.

She readily admitted Maryland had satisfied much for which her heart and soul had yearned, yet she sometimes felt that even in Maryland "being a lady" had its disadvantages.

Contrarily, Margaret took great pains to teach Mary Kittamaquaand to be a lady, and the child delighted in practicing the manners of her English "aunts." The manners were a game to little Mary who ardently tried to please her guardians. In a very little time she spoke their language with ease, though with a limited vocabulary.

She had not found it difficult to adjust herself to the ways of the household, but to clothing! . . . She was neatly inserted in muslin waists, drawers and petticoats and fetching little dresses of gingham which her "Aunt" Mary made for her. Margaret braided her hair and tied flashing bows of silk ribbons on the end of each little pigtail. The dresses, the petticoats, the hair-ribbons were

proudly worn; but learning to become accustomed to shoes was a painful experience.

For their part the Brent sisters allowed this little native child, whom they quickly grew to love, some independence for her greater happiness. Thus it was that Tidd had built for Mary Kittamaquaand her own wee cabin, off the bedroom wing of the Freehold, and in range of Margaret and Mary's bedroom windows. Only in the coldest weather could the child be prevailed upon to sleep in the main house.

She immediately acquired a proprietary interest in the Freehold acres. She spent much time in the company of Tidd, accompanying him on his rounds. When he was absent during planting and harvest time, tending the up-country acreage Margaret and Mary had acquired, the child, alone on her horse, covered the Freehold each day with a sharp eye for the unusual which she always confided to Tidd upon his return. After her first winter with them, Margaret felt she was familiar enough with the language, and sufficiently adapted to English ways, to admit her to the school. But unfortunately, some parents of her pupils resented this mixture of races, and threatened to withdraw their children if the "Indian waif" was to remain. Margaret bitterly resented this attitude until quite suddenly she determined to submit to it for her own particular purpose.

This concerned Giles. At the time Margaret gave little thought to the possible effect this segregation might have upon the young child. Margaret would not have admitted it, of course, but both she and Mary had ostracized Mary Kittamaquaand in their hearts as a sister-in-law.

But Giles was determined to marry the little Princess. His calculating eye had never removed itself from the wealth of land she would possess when she came into her inheritance.

Brother and sisters had heated words over this intention, but Giles remained firm.

"I shall marry her on her twelfth birthday," he told them.

"But you must not!" Mary protested. "That is the sort of thing the pagans do."

"All right, put me down for a pagan," Giles retorted. "That little princess is going to be milady. Think of what her in-

heritance will mean to all of us!"

"You might put it less bluntly," Margaret snapped, her eyes afire with indignation.

"No matter how delicately I might express myself . . ." Giles began. But Margaret would not listen.

"Our people will not let the child mix with theirs in my school," Margaret drove on. "How do you think they will react if you marry her? You might consider your sisters."

"I am considering you, and getting precious little thanks for my pains," Giles barked. "I have your welfare uppermost . . ."

"I am talking about morals," cut in Margaret.

"Morals!" Giles snorted. "Since the good God created the red man as well as the white man, wherein lies a questions of morals in the matter of a proper Christian marriage?"

"It simply is not done," put in Mary. "Nice people do not marry outside their own race."

"Then I shall jolt nice people from their smugness," countered Giles. "I have not come to Maryland for a Sunday afternoon boatride on the Thames. I want land and more and more land, and I intend to acquire it by every legitimate means at my disposal."

"But Giles," Mary protested again, while Margaret bit her lips to keep from emitting a stream of vitriolic condemnation, "marriages are made in heaven. Suppose Mary . . ."

"Rubbish!" roared Giles. "Pure fiction, the dreams of romantic spinsters. Marriage is a social expedient."

"You are incorrigible!" blurted Margaret at last.

"I'll be obliged you do not give that impression to my future wife," Giles warned her. "I aim for a degree of domestic contentment."

"I pray God the child refuses to marry you," Margaret blazed in reply. "And I do not forget that God helps those who . . ."

"Too late to help yourself, my dear sister," Giles interrupted with a triumphant smile, "I have made all arrangements with the Tayac."

"Oh, what they must think of the Christians!" wailed Mary.

"You simply cannot, must not do this thing, Giles," added Margaret, a note of sincere pleading in her voice.

"It is an ancient Indian custom," Giles informed her mildly, "to

make marriage bargains when the principals are in the papoose stage. . . ”

“Including the well filled out, middle-aged hulk that is yourself?” darted Margaret.

Giles chose to ignore this.

“My offer pleased the Emperor,” he finished. “He sees it as an especial blessing from the Great Spirit, which no doubt it is!”

There the discussion had ended.

Margaret and Mary had one consolation, one hope. Giles’ prospective bride was three years from her twelfth birthday. Much might happen in that time.

“The Widow Mountjoy at Kent?” Mary had suggested hopefully after Giles had left them.

Margaret shook her head.

“Never,” she said. “Widow Mountjoy is too restricted in circumstances. She has five children. Worse, she has bungled. Giles is wary of her.”

Giles spent the summer of 1642 at Kent making infrequent trips to St. Maries. Then he would call to see his sisters, and, as he tauntingly said, “my little bride-to-be.” On one such visit he spoke frankly to them of Vincent Waynehouse, governor of Kent. But he pledged his sisters to secrecy. He did not want his suspicions, no matter how well founded, to be spread about the City. They would embarrass Leonard.

“Does the Widow Mountjoy continue her neighborliness?” Mary had asked him.

Giles eyed her impatiently.

“She continues to be as pestiferous as Clayborne than which I can draw no worse comparison,” he said harshly.

Margaret had laughed at this, greatly to Giles’ annoyance. He expected her sympathy.

Early in September he came down to St. Maries again to attend the opening of the Assembly. On this trip he spent much time with Leonard. As a result of their conferences, on the 21st Leonard commissioned Giles to campaign against the Susquehannocks who were making frequent raids on Kent. The settlers were being constantly despoiled of their crops and cattle; often

one or more of them was captured and held for ransom, the implied alternatives being torture, death, and as was sometimes the dreadful custom, consumption of the remains.

Naturally Leonard was obliged to face the situation when Giles outlined it so fully. Cornwaleys was then absent on a mission against the Eastern Shore Nanticokes. Leonard proposed to give Giles a free military hand on Kent. Giles accepted, but with some private reluctance and misgiving.

"Waynehouse will continue as governor?" he asked.

"Naturally," answered Leonard, "but you will be in supreme command of the defense of the Island by land or sea."

"You are convinced," asked Giles then, "that aside from Clayborne who may show his troublesome hand at any time, the only other enemy is the Susquehannock?"

Leonard looked puzzled and his expression gave Giles his answer. Obviously Leonard had no suspicion of Waynehouse's private life on Kent. Giles did not relish the role of informer, and so he said nothing.

Before returning to the Island, however, he stopped by the Freehold.

"It will be walking into the lion's den," he told his sisters.

"You should have told Leonard the truth," opined Margaret.

"Why? Why should I?" he asked, looking at her questioningly. "Why should I be the one to inform against another? Leonard will have to discover the truth by some other channel. I am not an old gossip like — like the widow."

"Oh!" smiled Mary, teasingly, "is she a gossip?"

"The woman's tongue rattles in her head from morn till night," retorted Giles, crossly.

"But it was she who first roused your suspicions of Waynehouse," put in Margaret, a trace of accusation in her voice.

Giles flushed.

"You are right," he agreed, "but you know I put no faith in her gabbling until — "

"Until?"

"Until Waynehouse verified every word. For once the gossip told the truth."

"Do you mean to say you brazenly reported the whole line of

information to Waynehouse, himself?" Margaret was incredulous.

"There is only one way to handle gossip," Giles advised her. "If it gets too thick, go to the source and get the truth. Men do not whisper through the years like women. They get facts."

"Now, now," protested Mary, "do not be so uncharitable towards the poor widow. She is —"

"She is a blasted, interfering nuisance," stormed Giles. "Day after day she comes simpering and smiling, tripping over my land to my own door with offerings; custards, puddings, roast fowl, cakes, wine — bah! I know her game. She wants —"

"And it would be a far more suitable match than the one you plan," put in Margaret.

"We will not discuss that again!" cried Giles.

Margaret blazed at him. "I will discuss it as often as I please and with whom I please!" she flared.

"Another busybody gossip, eh?"

Margaret flushed crimson. Mary intervened.

"I wish you would explain everything to Leonard if you know it is all true," she begged. "It would truly be the best thing to do, Giles."

"You will permit me to follow my own inclination, please," Giles replied with thin courtesy. "Put yourself in Leonard's place. How would he receive the information from me? From anyone? What respect would he have for my good taste, my code of ethics, my honor?"

"Bother your honor," snapped Margaret. "I grant this is a delicate matter, but you jeopardize the safety of every soul on Kent by shielding immorality and dishonesty."

"I will not be a scandal-monger," roared her brother, bringing his clenched fist down on the table with a blistering bang. "If you think I, Giles Brent, am going to Leonard and say, 'Look here, your friend Waynehouse is a rotter. He lives openly with Nanduye, a native Empress aged eleven; he trades guns and ammunition with her people for beaver; he sends the fur to England without license, and pays tribute, as it were, to Clayborne who in turn keeps him supplied with arms. . . .' No, my irascible sister, that I will not report to Leonard about his friend. Of itself alone this evil will out, not from my tongue."

"I can see it all very clearly," retorted Margaret with cutting sarcasm. "You are well bred, Giles. Your native refinement of taste, your intuitive sense of the conventions, of the fitness of things makes Vincent Waynehouse's alliance with an Indian infant repugnant to you, and yet — "

"Margaret!" warned Mary, flutteringly.

" — and yet, because you contemplate a similar alliance yourself, even though you plan to dignify it by a sacramental marriage — "

"Stop!" roared Giles, his face crimson as he rose to stand threateningly over his antagonistic sister.

" — naturally," Margaret continued frigidly, not in the least intimidated by Giles' seething bluster, "it is readily understood why you would hesitate to place yourself in the position of condemning such a match."

"Hush! Hush! Hush!" begged Mary, weakly accenting each word by faintly clapping her hands.

"Giles is a moral coward, his code is expediency," Margaret told her heatedly.

"Why you — !" Giles drew his breath between his teeth. "You — !" He paused and looked at her darkly. "Understand, Margaret, my mind is fixed. We will not discuss this again."

Giles returned to Kent in a dark mood which did not lighten as he met with unprecedent obstacles in trying to raise an army for his purpose. Waynehouse, feathering his own nest, preached appeasement and reminded the inhabitants in exaggerated, and lurid detail of the fate of captives.

In a short time, Giles' patience grew thin. He seriously considered acquainting Leonard with the truth, but Margaret had been so right. To do so would bring to a head public opinion about an alliance such as he, himself, contemplated. It seemed that to save his own future face, he must now save Waynehouse's.

Meanwhile, since his return, the Widow Mountjoy had been more obtrusive than he could well abide. He decided to strip himself of some of his "charm" in her regard. It was pure coincidence that, as he returned one day from a meeting at the Tavern

with three friends, whom he had called upon to witness a piece of writing, the lady, herself, should come riding up his drive.

"Ah!" he breathed gallantly. After the afternoon's work he could afford to expand for her delight and with no risk to himself. "As I live and breathe," he smiled, "the charming Madame Mountjoy again graces Kent Fort Manor. A pleasure, milady, a pleasure." He helped her to dismount, and hitched her horse.

The widow blushed prettily. Giles had not been so cordial all summer. Her hopes rose high. As she walked beside him up to the house she handed him a napkin whose four corners were tied in a knot. As usual, it contained a batch of cookies, this time highly spiced, for their fragrance permeated the crisp fall air. Placing his hand under them, Giles felt they were still warm. 'Umph!' he thought to himself, 'she could not wait for them to cool off decently. So anxious for another excuse to get over here! Drat the woman. At last I have fixed her!'

But to the widow, he said, "Come, you have had a chill ride. A sip of wine by my fireside for you."

"Well," she temporized, "just a wee, wee sip. You know how people will talk!" She laughed foolishly.

"I know how some talk," said Giles, a little off guard, as he closed the door and helped the widow off with her cloak. 'If she leaves in an hour,' he thought, 'I will be especially favored by Lady Luck.'

He poured wine for them both and sat down by the fire opposite his guest, an expression of patient resignation on his face. The widow relaxed as well as the stiff-backed chair would permit and turned her most winning smile upon him.

"This madeira is so delicious," she cooed. "It has the excellence of everything about this house, and —" she hesitated, " — and including its charming master," she finished, dropping her eyelids coyly.

"Exceedingly kind of you," said Giles.

There was an uncomfortable pause. 'He is as cold as Newfoundland,' thought the widow bitterly.

She looked about her then, and spying the napkin with the cookies reposing dejectedly on the table where Giles had unceremoni-

ously dumped them, she said, "Oh, Captain Brent, do try one of my cookies. I made them just for you!"

"Eh? Oh, yes, by all means," said Giles absently, but he made no move. "Later, my dear lady, later, when I am alone again. When you have gone. Then I shall have them to remind me of your sweetness."

"Oh, Captain Brent!"

"Eh?"

"Oh, you are so charming," she drawled.

"Ah — er — yes, yes, quite possibly."

Giles was looking into the fire, so he did not see the frown which momentarily crossed the lady's brow. He was preoccupied with boredom.

"I hear you are raising an army for our protection," she said presently. "It gives one such a safe feeling, Captain Brent. You inspire such confidence."

Now Giles looked at her appreciatively.

"I have always been a man interested in military affairs," he said, tugging at his waistcoat and fluffing the linen ruffles at his wrists. "I have always been able to inspire men to follow me," he enlarged. "Why, at my own expense back in Gloucestershire, I once raised a company of horse for His Majesty."

"How perfectly, wonderfully glorious!" admired the widow. "Oh, I can see you now. You are magnificent, Captain Brent, simply magnificent, charging into battle at the head of your men."

Giles looked at her curiously.

"We guarded the King's person on public occasions," he corrected her, adding with a trace of bitterness, "I was not permitted to lead my men. The penal laws, you will recall. The command of my company was entrusted to a Protestant."

"Why, yes, naturally," rejoined the widow. "But here on Kent it will be different," she went on. "When are you going to march against the awful Susquehannocks?" she added.

"Presently, presently," answered Giles shortly, wary of her searching tone. "Perhaps quite soon, and then — I have only a few more arrangements. I have just completed a most important one today."

"Oh, yes?"

"Um, regarding my property."

"Your what? You mean Kent Fort Manor?"

"Exactly," said Giles, now immensely enjoying his company. "Might get killed in battle, you know. Better to arrange for these things. . . ."

"But a will"

"Wills are cumbersome sometimes. Takes time to have them settled. No, I have done better than that. I have deeded all my property, including Kent Fort Manor, to my sister Margaret." He paused to look at the widow intently. "Alas, Madame," he concluded, "you see a poor man before you."

Giles laughed inwardly.

The widow sat facing him, her eyes wide, her mouth gaping in silent astonishment.

"Such are the sacrifices of a military man," Giles sighed as though this were an afterthought. He looked sadly into the fire. "To think," he ruminated, "after all my efforts here, this house and this land are no longer mine to rule and manage."

The widow rose abruptly.

"I must be leaving," she said tersely.

"So soon? But I am so lonely here," said Giles guilelessly.

"I have spent too much time here as it is," replied the widow as she permitted Giles to assist her with her wrap. "I have five children," she added.

Giles remained unmoved.

"Good-day, Captain Brent," said the widow then, a stiff formality in her tone.

"Let me see you to the door," replied Giles.

"I shall be able to find it this last time," said the widow, reaching and opening it before Giles was able to do so. She gathered her full skirts in both hands. "Your reluctance over my departure is touching, indeed," she said. Then stepping over his threshold, she released her skirts and shook them violently.

"Oh, I shall be about, you know," said Giles amiably, "visiting my sister. You must be as good a neighbor to her as you have been to me."

But the widow, gliding down the drive as though it were glazed with ice, untethered her horse, mounted and turned her face

towards home before Giles was halfway to the hitching post to assist her.

"Mountjoy!" he laughed aloud. "Egad! Mount a nag and ride to Purgatory! Good riddance, milady!" He waved his hand gaily.

But the widow did not see him. She rode on, never turning around.

Back in the house Giles carefully sampled one of her cookies.

"Um, better than usual," he said to himself munchingly.

Had he known that at dawn the next day the Widow Mountjoy took herself off to St. Maries City, there to confer at length with His Lordship's Secretary, Giles might have been less generous in praising her cookies.

By the end of the following week, having made no headway in raising an expedition to go against the Susquehannocks, Giles returned to St. Maries, himself to consult again with Leonard. Waiting for him, a memorandum lying on the table caught his eye. The name Giles Brent was conspicuous, so Giles paused to read the entire message.

I would inform the Lieutenant General of some passages and demeanours of Mr. Giles Brent on Kent which give me cause to suspect some intents and desires of his to disaffect that Island and withdraw it into sedition.

Giles cheeks crimsoned under his heavy beard. He turned quickly as Leonard entered.

"I see you have read the memorandum," said the latter, drawing a windsor chair up to the fire. "Let us have it, Giles. What does this mean?"

"I should ask that of you," blurted Giles.

"Oh, come," temporized Leonard, "every man has his own story. That is why I sent for you. I intended to show this to you before we go to Court."

"Court?" asked Giles. "You sent for me? I have had no message. It is I who have come to see you. I have no business at Court."

"Strange," said Leonard, puzzled, "I gave word to Waynehouse three days ago."

"Who is the lying author of this?" demanded Giles pointing to the memorandum.

"John Lewger."

"That meddlesome fool!"

"Come, come," reproved Leonard, "why do you say that? I thought you two were on the best of terms."

"A likely assumption," snorted Giles. "The Lewgers are friends of my sisters."

"I know, so that I was the more surprised when he brought me this information."

"Did he get this lying accusation from Waynehouse? What was Waynehouse doing here?"

"To answer your first question, I do not know," said Leonard, plainly mystified at Giles' attitude. "As for the second . . ."

"Lewger is a fool if he thinks he can make good a charge of sedition against me! Let it go to Court!" he cried, his temper rising. "Let the people know what a — Let them laugh at Lewger! Egad! Accusing a Brent! Where did he get his information? That I demand to know."

"He will not reveal the source of the information, except to say it comes directly from Kent. And since you feel as you do, we will let it go to Court." Leonard was disgusted with Giles.

"What are the specific charges?" demanded Giles then.

For answer Leonard went to the highboy, and pulling out the topmost drawer of the heavy chest he handed Giles several pages of closely written manuscript. "Here is my personal copy, transcribed by the clerk," he said. "It is now twelve of the clock. At two, Court will convene and this information will be made public. I will leave it to you, Giles, whether you appear today or at your pleasure."

Giles took the manuscript and turned to the window to examine it. Leonard opened the door.

"Leaving?" asked Giles carelessly.

"Yes," said Leonard.

"Suppose," suggested Giles, "I just take this with me and go down to the Freehold. Margaret will relish this absurdity."

Leonard smiled.

"As you wish," he said, "and mind you tell Margaret of my intention to call this evening. A good night for waffles, eh?"

With that he left the room.

Giles tucked the bulky manuscript in his waistcoat. Making sure another document he carried was safely there too, he sought his horse, and headed down Main Street Branch towards the river and along the marginal way to the Freehold.

Six

TIDD announced Giles' arrival. All morning the girls had been working with bay-berry wax and candle molds in the utility shed.

"Why, Tidd," exclaimed Margaret, "is Captain Giles ill?"

"No, mam," advised Tidd, "he seems in excellent health."

"Then whatever can he be doing here?" asked Mary of her sister in some surprise. "He is supposed to be busily engaged at Kent."

"He is either in trouble or hungry," surmised Margaret. Then untying her great apron and flinging it on the bench by the door, she added, "Come, we'd better hurry if it's trouble."

"Tell Miranda to lay an extra place for dinner, Tidd," ordered Mary as she followed Margaret out the door and up the oyster-shell path to the house.

Entering they found Giles seated at the center table, a cup of wine in his right hand, while his left fingered the pages of manuscript laid out before him.

"You've made a vast improvement with your lighting," he observed without any preliminary greetings, indicating the windows which now boasted glass rather than oiled paper.

"It came out from home last week," advised Mary, "and Tidd lost no time in setting it for us. It is nice. It lets the outdoors in."

"What brings you here, Giles? You're supposed to be at Kent," demanded Margaret. "I smell smoke."

"Sensitive nostrils you have," he returned. "A pack of lies brings me here. Lewger is preferring charges against me this afternoon. Charges of sedition!"

"Sedition!" exclaimed Margaret incredulously. "Why are you here? Why are you not at Court to deny them?"

"I'm here to take you into my confidence," replied Giles with acid reproach.

"That's right, brother," said Mary.

"Umph!" asserted Margaret, puzzled and impatient. "What is that?" she asked, pointing to the sheets of paper on the table before him.

"The lies," he returned. "This is what that damn Lewger is about to announce to the Court concerning me."

"I don't understand," snapped Margaret. "Lies you say, yet you run here rather than to the Court to defend your good name — and ours!"

Giles looked at both his sisters silently. Then he said, "We three do not always see eye to eye, but we are one blood. To answer these charges and not divulge the true state of affairs on Kent will take careful thought," he went on. "First I want you to know what they are."

"That is logical," admitted Margaret. She looked at Mary. "Come sit here with me," she ordered, "while Judge Brent presides."

"Your sisterly solicitude is most touching," grumbled Giles.

"Now you two . . ." protested Mary.

"Go on, Giles. Read them off to us. I will watch your face whether they be true or false."

"I accept the challenge," said Giles. "Brace yourselves. You know small love is lost between Lewger and myself."

"You prejudice the witnesses," warned Margaret.

"Under today's date, October 17th, 1642," Giles began, ignoring Margaret's barb, "this document is entitled 'Information against Mr. Brent.' But compose your soul in patience while I find the meat in all this hash."

There was a long silence then as Giles carefully scanned Lewger's indictment.

At last he said, "Here, here is the gist of it:

. be the said Giles Brent upon his arrival at Kent understanding of a commission granted to Mr. Vincent Waynehouse for the command of that Island, and taking disgust thereat, or for some

other secret discontent or disaffection to the good and welfare of the government as may be reasonably supposed did not use or execute the said commission according to the power therein granted and the trust and charge undertaken by him, but devising how to make the commission and design ineffectual and successless with his own impunity as much as might be, and to give the people there an occasion of refusing and disobeying it, instead of a serious and thorough executing of it as his duty and charge was, did leave it to their consideration whether they were willing to be pressed or no, and used words to signify they should not be urged against their wills, but receiving from them some expressions of unwillingness be easily admitted thereof and of his own head without authority dismissed them again. . . ”

Margaret spoke first.

“Is it true?”

“A rank distortion,” said Giles honestly, looking her in the eye as he laid the manuscript on the table.

“What did happen?” begged Mary.

“I called for volunteers,” replied Giles, “and I got twenty. But the following day not one of them was willing to come. I am not going to lead twenty white-livered cowards against a cunning enemy.” His eyes scanned the balance of the indictment. “It says here,

‘ . . . the said Giles Brent may be called to answer upon oath to the said misdemeanors, contempts and such further interrogatories as shall be administered. . . ’ ”

“But,” said Margaret, “your commission left everything to your judgment. John Lewger does not take that into account.”

“Lewger is a meddlesome old woman,” snorted Giles. “He has never shot a rabbit, let alone a savage.”

“It is all very obscure,” said Mary, “and Anne Lewger is such a good friend. Only this morning she sent young John over with some of her new grape jam. . . ”

"Jam!" roared Giles. "You can talk of jam!"

"Mary means to imply that it is not customary for the executioner to send gifts the day he is to cut off your head," explained Margaret, coolly.

"Extremely amusing," retorted Giles with elaborate politeness. "But look here, Waynehouse has a persuasive way with him. Most of the populace believe his word is gospel truth. He has them in the palm of his hand."

"You must tell Leonard the truth. It is your duty," said Margaret.

"Yes," insisted Mary.

"No," said Giles.

"And this should be a lesson to you," added Margaret, "as to how impractical, even dangerous these native alliances can be."

"Stuff and nonsense," retorted Giles, his cheeks flushing.

"If you do not tell Leonard, I will," said Margaret in a tone of finality.

"Our family motto has always been 'Silence and Diligence,'" reminded Giles, "and bye-the-bye, my sister, I have another document here which vitally concerns you, inasmuch as you are my eldest sister."

Margaret looked at him reproachfully, but she said, "My present concern is for you. I am worried."

"Very pretty indeed, and appreciated," commented Giles.

A gong from the kitchen wing announced dinner.

"Here," he said, opening a legal paper and handing it to Margaret. "Scan this, and hold your fire. I'll be back in a moment. This paper is a week old."

A startled "Oh!" escaped Margaret's lips as Giles left the room.

"Read it!" demanded Mary.

Margaret looked at her in blank astonishment.

"These presents witness that I, Giles Brent, of Kent Fort in the Isle of Kent, gent, have conveyed and sold and do hereby convey and sell unto my sister Mrs. Margaret Brent of St. Maries in Maryland, all my lands, goods, debts due me, cattle and chattels and servants belonging to me in this Province aforesaid . . ."

Margaret paused to look at her sister.

"He has given me everything," she said, "every last thing. And he is accused of sedition!"

Mary was speechless for the moment. Why had Giles, the most aggressive and acquisitive of them all, impoverished himself and made Margaret a rich woman?

"Is it witnessed?" she asked presently, almost hoping it was merely a hoax.

"Yes," admitted Margaret, "by Thomas Cornwaleys, William Luddington and William Naufone."

When Leonard called that evening, he found Margaret and Giles in heated conversation. But he beamed at the three Brents as he announced, "I had the record vacated, Giles, but I cannot hold the tide. Lewger is determined to prosecute. I have also discovered from him the source of his information."

"I suppose I do have enemies," responded Giles. "Most worthwhile people do," he added as a cautious defense, "but I held seventy-seven proxies from Kent for the Assembly last month. Is the informer known to me personally? And what have I done to him?"

"I would not know that," responded Leonard, "but it is not a man, it is . . ."

"No!" broke in Margaret, her eyes lighting as she smiled at Giles, "it cannot . . . Why, Giles — you have been — why you meant it all. . . ."

"Exactly! For the past four hours I have been trying to explain. . . ."

"Leonard," demanded Mary, "are you talking of the Widow Mountjoy?"

"Yes," he acknowledged. "Thank you for helping me out, Mary."

"These two," she laughed, nodding at Margaret and Giles, "talk in riddles more than half the time. I have a hard time reading their minds."

Margaret looked at Mary and laughed softly. She had been inclined to doubt Giles, but now she believed him and was much relieved.

"Giles has been telling me," she said now to Leonard, "that he

has stripped himself of his property only to make himself less attractive to the widow."

"She is a foolish woman, Leonard," said Mary.

"But I might add," put in Giles, "that my sisters have managed to be extremely gracious to her during their visits at Kent."

"But how could we be otherwise?" defended Mary. "She is so very neighborly. One cannot spurn cordiality."

"Umph!" grunted Giles. "I suppose that is what you call it."

"But, Leonard," Margaret asked now, "I do not understand. Do you mean to tell us the Widow Mountjoy deliberately slandered Giles and John Lewger believed her?"

Leonard shifted uneasily.

"I suppose — well, she may have had every good intention. . . ."

"Blast it, man!" cried Giles, "is Lewger so thick-headed he cannot spot a — a —"

". . . a woman spurned," concluded Margaret.

"He is very conscientious," excused Leonard, temporizing.

"He is an old woman, himself!" roared Giles.

"I have no doubt you will make short work of the indictment," replied Leonard, stiffly.

"I *could* make short work of it. . . ."

"No, Giles, no, no," warned Mary.

"Yes, Mary is right," added Margaret swiftly. "There must be another — well, you leave it to us, Leonard."

"I presume I will have to," said Leonard, mystified. Then, turning directly to Giles, he added, "But, Giles, there could not be anything personal here? Between you and Lewger? He tells me you owe him eight thousand pounds of tobacco."

"I do not," stormed Giles, "that is his calculation. I owe him only three, and I am blasted now if I shall be at any pains to repay him quickly."

"I am sorry," said Leonard. "I see there is bad blood between you two. Lewger is well meaning. . . ."

"Lewger is a gullible, sanctimonious fool!" roared Giles. "If he knew the true state of affairs at Kent . . ."

"Giles!" cried his sisters in unison.

"What *is* the true state of affairs?" demanded Leonard.

"Oh, I am getting out," retorted Giles in utter disgust. "Why

Cecilius has to place every dithering dupe he can find in places of importance here is more than I can understand or stomach."

Grabbing his cape and hat, he flung open the door and banged it furiously behind him. There was an instant of dead silence, then Margaret and Leonard both reached the door together, Leonard opening it.

"Giles!" called Margaret into the black night. "Come back here. This is no Shakespearean tragedy!"

But they heard the receding hoofbeats of Giles' horse as he galloped down the rolling road to the river's edge.

"He will not drown himself," said Margaret, smilingly, as they closed the door and returned to the hearth.

"He is upset," excused Mary.

"If Lewger will not withdraw his absurd accusation," said Margaret, a set determination in her voice and expression as she looked frankly at Leonard, "Giles and I will make him — The idea," she continued in disgust, " — thinking he can disgrace a Brent."

"You believe Giles' excuse for making over his property to you?" Leonard asked, his face plainly puzzled.

"Certainly," replied Margaret. Then as the implication of his words dawned on her, she added, "Why, Leonard! Giles is a man of honor. I am amazed at you."

Leonard nodded but said nothing.

"Sometimes," Margaret concluded, "I think Giles has more interest in Maryland than Cecilius. 'Sedition'! My word!"

Leonard realized a pleasant evening was most unlikely, and so presently he withdrew.

When he had gone, the girls closed up for the night, and were preparing to retire, when Margaret said, "There is a nasty stench about this whole business."

"Yes, it is putrid," agreed Mary, vigorously brushing her hair.

Margaret was thoughtful.

"There is one thing Giles did not bargain for," she resumed pensively. "He took a great risk because he has given me a real weapon."

"Whatever do you mean?" asked Mary, pausing in the process of braiding her hair.

"Worldly possessions mean a lot to him."

Mary nodded, and went on with her braiding.

"When this trouble blows over and the widow is effectively discouraged," Margaret went on, "Giles will want all his property back. And he has assumed I will meekly relinquish it — as meekly as a kitten. But this kitten has claws."

"Margaret!" Mary stopped braiding her hair now, and gave her full attention to her sister.

"We shall make a bargain with our scheming brother."

"Please," begged Mary, "make yourself clear."

"I will return everything," promised Margaret, "every single thing on one condition. Giles must not marry Mary Kittamaquaand."

With that she kissed Mary good night, went to her own bedroom and closed the door.

The Court business, as Mary called it, dragged through all of November and into early December. The sessions were well attended for at this season the gentlemen planters had little pressing to occupy their time and the ladies neglected their winter chore, the making of rag carpets, to witness the daily cat-and-mouse proceedings.

"What did Giles say?" asked Mary the evening of November 2nd, when Margaret returned from the day at Court. Mary had refused to go. The painful disruption of the amicable relations between the Brents and the Lewgers was something she did not wish to witness.

"He was splendid," Margaret told her. "He only stated the facts."

"Is the case concluded, then?"

"Bless me, no," replied Margaret. "John Lewger will not let it rest there. You should have seen his face pale when everyone cried 'Hear! Hear!' as Giles concluded."

"Was the widow there?" Mary then asked.

Margaret shook her head. "The widow is in trouble," she said, "her two youngest children are down with the small-pox."

"The poor dears," exclaimed Mary. "I wonder if there is something I could do?"

"Mary!" cried Margaret, "that woman has brought all this

trouble on Giles. What would you do for her?"

"I see no reason why her maliciousness should restrain an act of Christian charity," said Mary, but her eyes twinkled. "Never fear, Margaret, I would not leave St. Maries now while this farcical trial is on."

Margaret had been right in her surmise of Lewger's further actions. In a short time he asked that formal judgment be given against Giles inasmuch as he had said nothing substantial in his defense.

"Substantial!" exploded Giles. "What the devil is substantial in that pussy's indictment?"

"Stop your barking," advised Margaret, "and let us put our heads together to compose a good reply to that. If you will use your wits, Giles, you can surely make Lewger look the fool now."

"My wits!" Giles looked at her cannily.

"Perhaps," said Margaret.

She was pleased with their joint composition:

I desire and intend to have it inquired by Counsel learned in the law of England, whether I have had wrong in the judgment passed against me in this Court yesterday, being the 7th of November, or whether not. If, in the opinion of such Counsel, I have had wrong in it, I intend to seek my right at the hands of our Sovereign the King, and for this reason I desire that my answer to the complaint against me, and the judgment and all other proceedings in this cause may still remain upon the record. November this 8th, 1642.
Giles Brent.

But Margaret's patience almost snapped as she heard John Lewger inform the Court that "Mr. Brent's reply is neither pertinent nor material." And that evening she realized Giles' patience was growing threadbare, too. The matter would come up for final settlement on the 17th.

The sisters insisted that Giles go to Leonard. Giles stubbornly refused. The eve of the 17th arrived. Margaret and Mary were determined their brother would not appear in court the following day. So they took advantage of his known weakness for wild game. On the evening of the 16th they had a gay feast, the three

Brents and Mary Kittamaquaand, and to the utmost of his capacity, Giles indulged. Thus, according to plan, next day Giles was abed with indigestion, and by the gentle art of mental suggestion, Margaret and Mary managed to keep him there four days more.

But during that time Margaret saw Leonard and told him the whole story.

"You should have come six weeks ago," he mildly scolded her when she had finished. But his face was grave. "I respect Giles' honorable motives in not wishing to inform against a friend of mine. But I would have preferred that he had come to me with the whole truth."

It was Leonard who then set the 12th of December as the day to conclude the unpleasant affair.

But when the 12th came, he proceeded cautiously. First he called upon Giles.

"I have already shown the Court on previous occasions," responded Giles, "that the charges against me are uncertain and insufficient. More it does not appear whether this be a prosecution civil or criminal. I protest my whole management of this business was guided by the best of my discretion for the honor and benefit of both His Lordship and the colony. I have been very far from affections of contempt," he went on, eyeing John Lewger, "my understanding of my commission being that it licensed me to proceed with discretion and honor. Therefore, I deny any guilt of alleged misdemeanor and contempt."

Now it was Leonard's turn.

As Giles sat down, Leonard rose in his place. Turning to Lewger, who was seated on his right, he said in an audible undertone, "I am fully persuaded that this is a matter for decision by the Court, as you, yourself, have averred in objecting to trial by jury."

Then straightening up, and looking directly at Giles, in a tone of precision and finality which promptly brought the latter to his feet again, Leonard said:

The Court, admitting the answer of the defendant finds him thereupon not to have omitted the execution of his commission by reason of contempt. And therefore for this bill and any others

similar admitted against you, Giles Brent, gentleman, the Court dismisses you sine die.

John Lewger was so surprised that he rose to protest, then realizing that Leonard's word was final, he desisted. As well he might, for a round of applause resounded through the room.

As they left St. John's where the hearings had taken place, many persons crowded around to congratulate Giles. Leonard received a share, too, for finally exercising his power to conclude the unsavory business.

Margaret stopped John Lewger on his way out.

"We have not seen Anne," she said, simply, "do ask her to call."

"If she is so inclined," replied the Secretary, "she will require no urging from me."

Four days later, Leonard removed Waynehouse as governor of Kent, and in a formal document beginning with the words, "We, relying much upon your prudent circumspection. . ." he reappointed Giles to his enemy's post. Now Giles was not only the military chief of the Island, for the successful conclusion of the trial left his commission still operative, but he was the civil administrator as well.

When Giles was alone with his sisters he put the document in his waistcoat, saying, "Let this be a lesson in the virtue of silence for both of you. I told you it would be wholly unnecessary to go into private family affairs for my vindication. Evil will out of itself. The Brents are impeccable."

"One Brent is consumed with conceit," retorted Margaret who otherwise kept her own counsel. Evidently Giles did not suspect her intervention.

"And another is quick to prick it," smiled Mary.

"This one is impervious to all your darts," concluded Giles, laughing heartily at both of them.

Seven

SINCE 1639, frequent allusions were made in Maryland conversations to the difficulties between King and Parliament at home. Cromwell, leader of the Independents, whom some dubbed Roundheads, was reported an invincible leader of cavalry, and one determined to fight any disciplined religious organization with arguments and armies. Instigator of rebellion to the Crown, he was a member of the House of Commons, and comfortably financed through inherited wealth derived from the wreck of the monasteries.

The sworn intent of the Puritans was to destroy the Church by Parliament established and abolish the despised Book of Common Prayer. The Roundheads had no affection for Presbyterianism; and the ancient faith — Catholicism — they avowed was the essence of evil.

In 1640 Laud, King Charles' Archbishop of Canterbury, had been imprisoned in the Tower by Cromwell; and thirty-five peers, including the Roman Catholics, had withdrawn from the House of Lords and joined the King at York, London being too securely in the possession of the Roundheads for His Majesty's safe residence. The Earl of Warwick, ardent Puritan, whom the Brents had good cause to remember, since it was he, many years ago, who had first imprisoned their brother William, had been made Admiral of the Fleet in April 1642. In August of the same year, on the 25th, the King had raised his standard at Nottingham, with none but his personal bodyguard to defend it. Henrietta Maria, visiting her daughter, the Princess Mary in Holland, who was now married to the Prince of Orange, had there sold the crown jewels. Thus Charles acquired the funds for an army which the Earl of Lindsey

would command for him, while his nephew, Prince Rupert, would lead the King's Horse. In September His Majesty had moved to Shrewsbury to hold the Severn valley.

Meanwhile in Maryland, if not in the Severn valley then at its mouth, there were signs of infectious trouble as the eve of 1643 approached under an ominous cloud of gloom. Here the Lord Baltimore had offered refuge to the Puritans exiled from Virginia where the new governor, Sir William Berkeley, staunch Royalist, had firmly rooted the Established Church by crushing fines for non-attendance, and had insisted the Book of Common Prayer be used exclusively.

"They call the place Providence," Leonard told Margaret, who now spent much time at Kent but had returned to the Freehold on the eve of the Annunciation. Leonard thereupon had invited himself for supper. "I cannot believe the hand of Providence will reign there."

"Why are you so mistrustful?" asked Margaret. "Are they not sincere in their beliefs, and do these beliefs forbid them to respond graciously to hospitality? You speak as though you anticipated they would abuse Cecilius' good offer. I do not understand you, Leonard. You seem changed, suspicious, nervous — are you ill?"

"Oh, Margaret," replied Leonard impatiently, "have you lived in a silk cocoon at Kent these past months? The fever at home is spreading like fire here. Maryland is still the only English colony offering genuine religious freedom; but now Cecilius has given sanctuary to a sect which, over and over, at home and in Massachusetts, has indicated that its notion of freedom of conscience extends no further than the limits of its own self: that it is for Puritans only."

"When is Cecilius coming out to Maryland?" put in Mary. "It seems to me, Leonard, you carry a great responsibility alone. Cecilius is the master of Maryland."

"You have not heard?" asked Leonard.

"What?" demanded Margaret.

"Cecilius has been placed under bond not to leave the realm. He planned to come this past January."

"God have mercy," exclaimed Mary. "What next? Poor Cecilius. Will he never see his Maryland?"

"I have grave doubts," said Leonard. His tone was heavy with foreboding. Margaret stirred uneasily.

"You were speaking of Providence, the Puritan refugees," she reminded him.

He eyed her curiously, but made good use of the advantage she had given him.

"Yes," he agreed. "Their real leader is one Richard Bennett of Virginia, a confidant of Clayborne's."

"That man again!" lamented Mary.

"Bennett is also the member of the Virginia Assembly who, only last year, urged that body to petition Parliament so that Virginia might revert to her *status quo* of 1624."

"Whatever for?" asked Mary, puzzled.

"I suppose to vacate Cecilius' charter?" questioned Margaret.

"Precisely," acknowledged Leonard. "Bennett explained that only in this way could 'that obnoxious weed, popery,' be swiftly uprooted in Maryland."

"Did Cecilius know of this before he offered haven to the Virginia Puritans?" asked Margaret.

"Definitely," said Leonard, "for I reported it to him and received an acknowledgement. In spite of this, he insisted I offer refuge. That is one reason — one of many, I assure you — why I wish he were here now to take the consequences."

"Why do you qualify Bennett as the *real* leader at Providence?" asked Margaret.

"Because I know him to be so," replied Leonard, "although the apparent leader is William Durand, an elder, as they call it, in their church. He is a fiery orator, too, and his arch hatred is 'papists'."

"Perhaps his society should be cultivated," suggested Margaret, speaking slowly and carefully, thinking out her sentences. "If he could know us for what we are, people not inclined to evil, peace-loving and tolerant — if he could really know 'papists' he might see more clearly the advantages of Maryland sanctuary and so persuade the Providence Puritans to be grateful for our hospitality."

"A noble idea," Leonard applauded, "but it is a little late."

"How do you mean?"

"Just so," Leonard explained. "Hardly had the Puritans taken initial root at Providence than some of their number, dissenting from the majority in points of religion, broke away, taking themselves off to the Schuylkill River, where, without a by-your-leave or even word to the Government here, they have built another settlement."

"Did they go beyond Cecilius' patent?"

"No, but William Kieft, governor of New Netherland sent two armed sloops to dislodge them. You know Kieft has always disputed Cecilius' patent. He claims for the Dutch prior right of discovery by Columbus because in 1492 the Netherlands were under Spanish rule."

"Fantastic!" exclaimed Mary.

"Straining at a gnat," declared Margaret.

"Trouble ties up to your own hitching post unasked," observed Leonard, "and I am frankly disturbed. Captain Cornwaleys seems to be on the most affable terms with Durand at Providence, and both are seen much in the company of Richard Ingle."

"Ingle!" Margaret's voice rose. "I wondered how long before you would come around to Ingle! Now, if you should ask me to put a finger on the real trouble — the evil genius among us, I would call it Ingle. Providence is only incidental."

"So!" exclaimed Leonard, his eyes lighting up and his face showing animation. "I might have known with your keen mind and sharp intuition you would see that."

"Ingle and Clayborne are inseparable," said Margaret bitterly, wholly ignoring Leonard's compliment. "All of Kent is aware that these two are confidants."

Margaret was right. But Cecilius, himself, had sent Ingle to Maryland.

Richard Ingle was master of the ship *Reformation*, and it was on this vessel that the Lord Baltimore had sent two secular priests into his Providence, the Fathers Gilmett and Territt. Cecilius had taken this precaution to provide against the possibility that his dispute with the Jesuit Provincial in Rome over land grants to the Jesuit mission in Maryland, might result in a withdrawal of those fathers who had gone out and remained with his colonists. Full details of this unfortunate dispute were not known in Maryland

itself, but the fact that a disagreement existed was a source of mutual embarrassment which extended to the secular priests who refused to entrench themselves when they surmised the Jesuit position.

Whatever the destiny which moved Cecilius Calvert to engage the services of Ingle to transport his secular priests — it was an ill-fated one. Ingle had been a disruptive element, bringing to the full fore of colonial consciousness the trouble between King and Parliament. Since his arrival, the Maryland Assembly, including members from Providence on the Severn, had passed a statute directly echoing a similar one enacted by the London Parliament and broadcast in the colony by Ingle. The London statute had prohibited the King from dissolving that body, as he had the first three of his reign. Forty-eight members of the Maryland Assembly subsequently had declared:

that the house of Assembly may not be adjourned or prorogued but by and with consent of the house.

This was in direct defiance of the powers of the Lieutenant General given him by the Lord Baltimore, whose own sovereignty was guaranteed by royal charter. Moreover Ingle had seen to it that the name of Cromwell (alias Williams, — some even hinted a kinship with Roger Williams of Rhode Island) would become a household word in Maryland.

“A dreary enough outlook for the New Year,” agreed Margaret. The three of them stood in the doorway as Leonard took his leave. “But come tomorrow, Leonard. We will have open house as usual — let us forget for a day.”

Leonard’s face, lighted by the candle and firelight from within, looked sad and grave.

“I wish I might spend the day with Cecilius,” he said with a sigh.

“Well, come to us instead,” urged Mary, smiling. “Giles will be here, you can talk with him. You know, Giles sees things very clearly. Try not to be dismal, Leonard — just for the New Year.”

He smiled at them then.

“I have been selfishly gloomy,” he apologized. “Forgive me, both of you, do. I promise sunshine for tomorrow.”

"Looks like rain to me," said Margaret, scanning the heavens.

And she was right, for the New Year dawned to a cold, penetrating dampness which by noon was a fine mist and by evening a downpour. But as though their friends had resolved to be gay and light-hearted for this one day at least, there was merriment and laughter at the Freehold; the festivities proceeded in traditional fashion.

The Brent sisters provided ample bowls of posset and rum punch; for the more temperate there were steaming pots of wild berry tea. There was also homemade wine, or, for the more fastidious, imported madeira. The buffet was replete with Maryland delicacies: oysters, lobsters, clams and crabs, wild turkey, terrapin and venison. Margaret's waffles were light and crisp. These and Mary's famed biscuits provided delicious conveyors of honey, jams or Freehold maple syrup.

Tidd had found a valuable servant in the person of a middle-aged Negro, Sam, who had been brought in from the West Indies by an enterprising ship's master. Now this one played his fiddle the afternoon and evening through. While the guests danced and frolicked, Leonard and Giles remained to one side, deep in a serious conversation. Now and then Margaret flashed past them, pausing to offer a confection, but she gave no hint she would join in their deliberations. Her confections were popular and disappeared like gold sovereigns — walnuts and hickory nuts in thin cakes of maple sugar, and of course, there was molasses taffy, too.

The dancing kept up until late in the evening; not once did the ample feast give signs of exhaustion. But finally the time came when decorum dictated a cessation, and couple by couple, parties took their leave, and the Freehold quieted down to face in earnest the coming year.

Leonard went with Giles as far as the White House, and from there, he made his way alone to St. Gabriel's. Although his discussion with Giles had been satisfactory and helpful, as he went on in the rain, which was now of drenching proportions, he did not think of this friend, but of Margaret.

He had long since resigned himself to the probability that he could not win more than her loyal friendship, yet he had been annoyed this day to see her mingle so gaily among her guests; a

bright word for this one, a spark of repartee for another, but with never a very special word for him beyond her first gracious welcome. He had never left any room for doubt in her mind as to his true sentiments towards her, yet because he had so thoroughly exposed to her his tenderness — had let her see how deeply he cared, he could not escape a feeling of pique and incredulity that now she so obviously considered the matter a closed book between them.

He had one consolation. He had sent a letter to Fulke at Larke Stoke. For one foolish moment he debated turning his horse about, going back to the Freehold to tell Margaret of it. But he did not turn, if anything he urged his mount to more speed towards St. Gabriel's and a warm fire where he might dry out his sopping clothing. And as he rode along, he smiled to himself. If Margaret only knew. If she had read the letter before he sent it — would she then continue to remain so aloof? Would she pause? Perhaps reopen the book? Reconsider? Should he have told her — just as a matter of family interest?

The questions revived his self-esteem somewhat — though the sane answer to each one was "no." But then in the next moment his spirits fell again. More important questions demanded answers. Among these were, 'How will Fulke receive my letter?' and 'Should I go to see Cecilius?' It was the latter question which he had discussed with Giles.

Reaching St. Gabriel's at last, though the hour was late, he sat down for awhile by the fire his servant had kept going against his return. Dared he leave the province now? Dared he miss the opportunity to go to England? Would the same opportunity present itself a year hence? Before morning he reached a decision.

On the 15th of April, Leonard sailed for England aboard the *Abigail*.

He left Giles as acting Governor and Lieutenant General of the province. The proclamation of this appointment flapped in the breeze around the old mulberry tree as the *Abigail* dipped below the eastern horizon. It was dated April 11th.

"Uneasy rests the head that wears a crown," taunted Margaret next day as Giles showed her his copy of the Commission. But, as they knew the head under the English crown at that moment was

most uneasy, the quip fell a little flat. Furthermore Ingle was still in Maryland.

Giles' first act was to revise his plan to raise an expedition against the Susquehannocks which because of two persons, the widow Mountjoy and Vincent Waynehouse (not to mention John Lewger), had been too long delayed, he believed, for the safety of the Province. Giles' present position as governor general gave him full power to proceed with this project. Almost at once he secured a ten man army and sent it to Poplar's Island to build a base for operations. Here, under the direction of Cornwaleys, Fort Conquest was built on the north side facing Kent and the mouth of the Susquehanna River. Immediately, the people at Providence suspected some dire plot. This precaution attended to, Giles felt the colony was more secure against the Susquehannocks, Clayborne and Ingle. It was apparent that Clayborne's loyalty to His Majesty had not been secured by the royal appointment given him in 1642 as King's treasurer within the dominion of Virginia for the duration of his life.

But as one sleepless night followed another, Giles weighed his most pressing problem which was embodied in the person of Richard Ingle. The dignity of the Lord Baltimore and his Province was challenged by this blackguard; not to mention the dignity of the Crown, itself. Finally Giles concluded he could no longer put off the action which he had ardently hoped to delay until Leonard's return — unless, meanwhile, Ingle, himself, should conveniently take his unwelcome person out of the Province. But Giles knew this would be too much to expect.

It was a little venture of Margaret's which finally forced his hand.

Eight

MARY was roused from a sound sleep one night late in January by a loud knocking at her door which opened onto the courtyard garden. She lay still for a moment, rigid with fear; had she dreamed this noise? But, no, there it came again, and she seemed to hear Margaret's voice calling her name in a harsh whisper. This was strange, because Margaret was at Kent.

Mary got out of bed, the cold floor sending shivers from the soles of her bare feet to the crown of her head. She reached in the dark for her wrapper, and lighting a candle from the last flickering ember on the hearth, she hurried to the door.

Opening it cautiously, the apparition which met her eyes caused her to slam it to again in sudden fright.

"Mary, Mary," called the voice whose owner was shivering with cold, "it is I, Margaret. Open, Mary."

Beyond doubt it was Margaret's voice. Reassured on this point, once again Mary opened the door just a crack. Margaret waited for no ceremony now, but taking her advantage forced her way into the room, shoving Mary off balance.

"Sorry, dear," she said gently, "but I must be admitted!"

"So it is you," replied Mary, recovering herself, "but Margaret, you are a fright. You scared the wits out of me."

"I know," said Margaret, removing the beaver cap which came down over ears and neck, hiding all her hair. Her face was filthy, darkened about cheeks and chin as though she were growing a beard. And the clothes! Mary looked at them horrified.

Margaret chuckled. "A good fit, eh?" she laughed. "They're Tidd's."

"For pity's sake," exclaimed Mary, sinking down on the edge of her bed. "Margaret! What have you been up to?"

Pouring herself a basin of water, first breaking the thin crust of ice in the pitcher, Margaret began with cloth and soap to scrub her face. "I've been to Providence," she said, her voice smothered in the washcloth, "and I must talk to Giles right away. Do you suppose you could get Tidd to go for him?"

"I'll try," said Mary, "it's a good chance to see if our scheme will work." Going to the head of her bed, she reached down for the brass bell she always kept on the floor for emergency. Once more opening the door just enough to get her hand through, she rang the bell furiously. In the still night it clanged so loudly she wondered if it might even be heard in Virginia. This had been the scheme to signal in case of fire or intruders.

Closing the door then, she reclaimed her perch on the edge of the bed, and holding the bell securely, with the clapper imprisoned in her fingers, she said, "Now, Miss Margaret, please explain." And before Margaret could bring her face from the towel, she added, "Yesterday you said you were returning to Kent. You deceived me," she concluded with a reproach Margaret recognized as purely perfunctory.

But before Margaret could reply little Mary Kittamaqua and crept into the room. It was too cold for her to use her cabin these nights, and while Margaret was at Kent the child slept in her bed. Now she rubbed her eyes, and asked in a worried voice, "What is the great trouble? A fire?"

Then seeing Margaret in a man's garb, the child laughed, "Oh! Aunt Margaret, do I dream of you? Oh, how funny."

Mary gently led the child back to bed. "Yes," she whispered softly, "it is a bit of a dream with no worry to it. Just strange grown-up goings on. There," she added, tucking the little ten year old snugly into bed, "there. All is well, dear. You go back to sleep."

The child was reassured. Reaching her arms about Mary's neck, she pulled her down for a kiss.

By the time Mary had the candles lit in the living room Tidd was at the door, breathless and gun in hand.

"Go for the Governor," said Mary, "tell him Mistress Margaret is here with very important information. Say he must come here immediately."

"Yes, mam," replied Tidd, relieved that no danger loomed. He had gone only a short way, when Mary called, "Tidd!"

"Yes, mam?" he asked, retracing his steps.

"Are you sure you are dressed warmly enough? Here, take this. It is cold tonight." And Mary returned his beaver hat just discarded by Margaret.

"I'm glad Mistress Margaret is safe home," said Tidd gratefully adjusting the hat. "You understand, Mistress Mary, I tried to persuade her against whatever it was she planned. But she gave me orders, mam."

"I know, Tidd," comforted Mary. "I know. It is quite all right."

"Very well, mam. Yes, mam," responded Tidd, and disappeared into the darkness.

Then Mary busied herself, adding fuel to the glowing embers on the great hearth. Taking a candle she went into Margaret's alcove "for accounts" where certain supplies were also kept. She came out with a bottle of rum and proceeded to prepare a great mug of posset for them all. Of course she was curious to know what Margaret had to tell but she knew from experience that she could never guess the truth. Margaret was the spice of life to Mary. Whatever she had been up to, Mary was sure her purpose was worthy and the outcome probably fruitful. Margaret seldom failed. She knew, too, that plenty of trouble would likely hatch in Providence.

Presently Margaret came into the room. She had changed into flannel nightgown and long wrapper; had scrubbed her face clean and glowing, and groomed her always lovely hair. Her wrapper was a pale blue wool; wool from their own sheep, and the dye a native concoction brewed for her by little Mary. Seated now before the fire, relaxed, glad to be safely home, she looked lovely enough to hug, thought Mary. The warmth from the burning logs increased the subtle fragrance of lavender with which Margaret scented all her clothes.

"Things are in a fearful state," she said as she took the pewter mug of hot milk and rum which Mary gave her. "I wish Leonard were here," she added pensively.

"Giles is capable," said Mary.

"Of course," Margaret readily agreed, "but the responsibility grows heavier each day."

Mary sat feasting her eyes on this dearly beloved sister. There was an intentness about her look though, which Margaret noticed.

"What's the trouble, dear? Is my face still dirty?" She laughed.

But Mary was serious. She said, "I suppose your story is going to wait for Giles?"

"It will save repeating — do you mind?" replied Margaret.

"No, though I am burning with curiosity," Mary answered. "But I'm also teeming with a bit of news."

"Yes?" said Margaret, "good or bad, dear?"

"It depends," said Mary.

"On what?" asked Margaret.

"On —" oh, dear, thought Mary, what can I say, "on — well, on how you feel."

"I'm a little tired," admitted Margaret, "but go ahead."

Physical feeling had not been what Mary meant; it went deeper than that — to the heart.

"Margaret," she began now, "do you — of course I've no business to ask, yet this is something you must know, but do —"

"Come, come, Mary," said Margaret now sitting on the edge of her chair. "What are you trying to tell me. Has someone died?"

"No, no," protested Mary. Then she looked at Margaret keenly. "Do you love Leonard?"

Margaret laughed and leaned back again.

"Do I love Leonard?" she repeated. "Yes, my pet, I do. I have a deep and abiding affection for him. I think he is one of the finest men I've ever met; he has character, charm, chivalry, understanding. Of course I love him, just as I love my own brothers, even Giles."

Mary's expression had wavered between hope and distress. Now she quickly took up the cue Margaret had unwittingly given.

"I'm glad to hear it," she said, "because Leonard *is* your brother."

"What!" exclaimed Margaret, jumping up and very nearly spilling her posset on her wrapper. "What on earth?"

"Leonard and Anne were married last June," Mary told her.
"Giles just had word from Fulke today. Very sparse, of course."

"Married! Anne! Oh!"

Margaret was completely surprised.

"It is really a compliment to you, dear," said Mary now, as usual tumbling out her words for fear she had unintentionally dealt a blow.

"How do you mean?" demanded Margaret, memories — many memories of Leonard flashing through her mind.

"Don't you remember when Elizabeth wrote of dear Papa's death she said Anne grew more and more like you each day?"

"Did Leonard know that?"

"I think we told him, yes," said Mary, "you know how he was always asking for Anne."

"But she is only a baby — a little girl with braids."

"Not now, Margaret," Mary reminded her. "We have been away five years. Anne is seventeen, now."

"And Leonard wanted marriage," said Margaret more to herself than to Mary, "wanted it so very much."

"I'm sorry, Margaret," Mary said then, coming over to her side.

"Oh, no need to be sorry. We should be glad. I meant what I said, dear. I do love Leonard, but not as a wife should."

"Anne is going to have a child," Mary added then, "perhaps by now it is already born."

"Anne — seventeen!" Margaret was lost in thought. In a moment, she reached for Mary's hand, and pressing it close to her cheek, she said, lovingly, "You were right, my pet, you certainly had a piece of news. God bless them both."

When Giles arrived, he was in foul humor. It was three o'clock in the morning. He blustered in with, "What the devil now, Margaret? Couldn't it hold till daybreak?" and clumping over to the hearth, he blew violently on his hands which were almost blue with cold.

"It is important, Giles," said Margaret, exceptionally patient with his impatience. "It is about Ingle at Providence."

"How the devil do you know anything about Ingle at Providence? You are supposed to be at Kent. I wish to heavens you

would stay in one place. I have enough to contend with, without being annoyed by the secret movements of my sister."

"I have just come from Kent, by way of the Freehold and Providence," advised Margaret cryptically.

"And in Tidd's clothes!" put in Mary.

"Are you both insane or am I sleep walking?" asked Giles, taking a drink of posset to reassure himself.

"No, Giles, you are awake, at least I hope you are!" Margaret smiled at him. For all his faults she did love this brother of hers. "This is the way of it," she went on, "I began to think . . ."

"Which usually means trouble," broke in Giles.

"Exactly," said Margaret. "Ingle and Clayborne were at Kent day before yesterday."

"Clayborne, too?"

"Yes," insisted Margaret, "and old Sam, you know our Negro, was delivering corn to the Fort and saw them, close to. He heard Ingle propose they go to Providence to see Bennett and 'what can be stirred up.'"

"So?"

"So, I decided to go, too!"

"You would!" Giles was annoyed. "You wouldn't consider your obligation satisfied to send me word of this. No, you must go yourself. Margaret, must I remind you again of woman's place?"

"No, don't trouble," replied Margaret serenely, "you often fail to grasp the importance of seemingly innocent happenings. I knew it would be a waste of time to send word to you."

"Time was heavy on your hands, probably," answered Giles. "Well, get on with your story. You don't need to pull me out of bed in the middle of the night just to indulge in idle chatter."

"The night before last," Margaret began finally, "Mr. Durand, the elder of the Church there called a mass meeting. The bait was Ingle. He was to make a speech — and what a speech!"

"I can imagine," nodded Giles, all interest now. "He has made some inflammatory remarks in and about St. Maries, too."

"For example?" asked Margaret.

"Oh, he has been heard to say, so I am reliably told, that King

Charles is no king and cannot be unless he joins with Parliament . . .”

“He said the same thing in Providence,” interrupted Margaret.

“And that the King’s Lieutenant General, Prince Rupert, is a traitor, a rogue, a rascal; that if he had him aboard the *Reformation* he would whip him at the capstan.”

“He omitted that in Providence,” Margaret advised, “but he had plenty else to say.”

“Look here,” interrupted Giles now, a note of genuine anxiety in his voice, “did anyone see you, recognize you? It might embarrass the government.”

“If they did,” Mary offered, “they saw a tramp, a scamp. Margaret was completely disguised and she looked awful to behold.”

“I should know by this time,” said Giles relieved, “that Margaret thinks of the smallest detail always. Go on, sister.”

“That’s right, Giles,” replied Mary, “now enjoy your drink and let Margaret get to her story. I have waited long enough.”

“I took the roan,” began Margaret, “and as Mary says I did a very neat bit of hiding my identity. Of course I had to give Tidd an excuse for borrowing his clothes, but I did not tell him my real destination. When I heard about the meeting for last night . . .”

“Never mind preliminaries,” urged Giles, “get down to the meeting.”

Margaret looked at him a moment, then said, “This is my story, and this is the way it goes — I begged supper at Durand’s . . .”

“Into the very jaws of death!” broke in Mary melodramatically.

“No,” corrected Margaret. “At home Durand is as mild as a cat. He even seems browbeaten; had to ask his wife if he could give ‘this traveller from Virginia’ some supper. I had told him I was leaving Virginia for Massachusetts because I was living too close to popery for my peace of mind.”

“You said that!” demanded Mary.

“To throw him off the scent,” explained Giles approvingly. “Damn clever, and amusing too, since you’ve crossed the ocean to indulge in ‘popery’ to your heart’s content!”

“Well,” Margaret went on, “he said, ‘Why do you go to Massachusetts? Why not settle in Providence? Do you have a trade?’ ”

"Whatever did you say then?" asked Mary, now also amused. "I said I was a cattle hand," replied Margaret, her eyes twinkling. "Oh! Ho!" laughed Giles.

"You, a cattle hand!" joined in Mary, "you, who are scared to death of a cow!"

"Get on with it," Giles begged.

"He asked me to go to the mass meeting," resumed Margaret, "and I said I wouldn't mind if I did. Maybe I would settle there if there were no papists. He said, 'Indeed not!' and that an important representative from the English Parliament was going to make a speech. I said, 'Oh, you mean that jolly Cromwell fellow?' but he said, no, not yet, but in time, no doubt! Said this man was Richard Ingle, a great friend of Mr. Richard Bennett who had arranged the settlement at Providence and Captain William Clayborne who was here with him." Margaret paused, as she reflected upon what had followed. The statement was laughable, but it had also infuriated her. "Imagine the insolence of Durand," she concluded, "or could it be no more than ignorance? At any rate he tried to make me believe that Clayborne was the only lawful patentee of all Maryland!"

"All Maryland, now!" Giles exclaimed.

". . . and that the papists would soon learn this to their sorrow," finished Margaret.

"Oh, me!" lamented Mary. "Do you suppose Cromwell has — oh, good gracious! Why Cecilius, the year we came over, told us that Clayborne before the Privy Council claimed a patent to Kent — that was all, and he even admitted he had that under the seal of Scotland." She looked at Margaret questioningly. "You held out for Cecilius, you must have! Did you let Durand think you believed him?" Her voice carried a plea for denial.

"Under the circumstances," Margaret told her, "I gave Mr. Durand to understand I believed implicitly every word he spoke."

Then, turning to Giles, she said, "Incidentally, brother, that Peter Knight at Kent annoys me. He was riding over my land the other day and when I asked him what he wanted, he said, 'Air'!"

"Knight is a little rough," advised Giles, "but harmless," he added.

"Perhaps," nodded Margaret. "But, to go on. There was a

great bonfire in the middle of the green and the whole of Providence turned out. Everything was very formal. Durand presented Bennett, and Bennett introduced Ingle as the 'Parliamentary liberator of Maryland'!"

"By Jove!" exclaimed Giles.

"Then Ingle began his speech," Margaret went on, "and it was terrible. I was furious. He said it was the fond hope of his friends here, especially Bennett and Durand, to see a confusion of all papistry in Maryland. That the present government of Lord Baltimore was as tyrannical as could be expected when recusants held power. That we showed no mercy toward any Protestant; that we deliberately seduced and forced many into our religion which was the entity of all the evil on the earth. That unless put down and crushed into the earth, the wicked papists would drag all to their own level of degradation and indecency."

"Good Lord!" cried Giles, obviously shocked.

"He sounds like a madman," said Mary.

"I can tell you I was almost a madman," Margaret replied. "I wanted to shout denials. I — yes, I wanted to kill the lying bigot. But of course, I could do nothing but keep on listening. He told the people to hold fast, that they had a great champion in Oliver Cromwell, who was now rooting the papists out of Ireland, and would do the same in England next and then all would be peace and harmony here. There will be freedom for all but papists, he said."

"Sanctuary!" muttered Mary bitterly, but Giles and Margaret ignored her.

"He said," Margaret went on, now pacing the floor in time with the tempo of her report, "that Providence on the Severn was no more free at this time than the cells in the Tower of London 'where papist leaders will soon be awaiting execution.' This condition would continue, he told them, until popery was destroyed."

"Oh, yes," said Giles, "men are always going to 'destroy popery' which has outlived a hundred Cromwells."

"Ingle then told the people in all seriousness that Lord Baltimore, our dear Cecilius, was anti-Christ; that His Majesty was under the 'spell' of papistry, and Laud had tried to revive popery in the

Established Church; that the King had permitted the pagan Mass in the palace to please his consort the papist bitch!"

"Margaret!" cried Mary, shocked at the vulgar word.

"I'm reporting," defended Margaret.

"Go on," urged Giles.

"He said the Government at St. Maries, at the direction of 'anti-Christ' would not permit a Protestant minister to settle here."

"None would come," protested Giles, "and there is a fund to pay his salary when one does."

"I know that as well as you," countered Margaret, still pacing the floor. "But Ingle is not interested in truth. He said if one had come, he would have been coldly murdered and left lying in his own blood as a warning to others. He said we settled the exiles at Providence, hoping our native enemies would exterminate them, but that Clayborne was their friend and was keeping the savages off. He said we had secretly armed them. I did have a laugh," Margaret paused then, "one short laugh."

"Yes?" asked Giles.

Margaret stopped in her tracks to give as genuine an imitation of Ingle as she might. "Well I know, my friends," he said, 'that even now as I stand before you, I risk my life, for among you who now hear my voice, no doubt those malignant papists have secured a spy. . . ."

"Oh," exclaimed Mary, "weren't you frightened, Margaret?"

"Yes, I was," answered Margaret, looking now at Giles, "for even as I was laughing to myself at this, I saw Durand coming towards me."

"Margaret!" In one of his rare gestures of tender affection Giles went to her and put his arm about her. She leaned against him readily, now feeling very tired. "You were in grave danger," protested Giles, looking at her, "you must not do these things. You . . ."

"I looked him square in the eye," said Margaret as she looked at her brother, "and I said, 'Verily, Mr. Durand, every word he speaks but says what my heart knows to be true. May the good God speed the day of our delivery.' Then, when it seemed safe to do so, I stepped back into the deep shadows at the edge of the

firelight, and when I got in the black darkness, I ran for the roan. I had her tethered in some brush just beyond the settlement on the main trail. As I ran, I heard Ingle's voice still ranting and the crowd still applauding and cheering. I heard him say, 'I ask you, on whose side stands the true God? On our side with Christ, or on the side of anti-Christ?' "

Nine

GILES was very pleased with Margaret's escapade and he spared no words to praise and thank her. He was proud of his sister who was so often a cause of irritation to him. He reflected that no man had thought to undertake such a service to the colony. Now he was determined to put a stop to Ingle's plots and intrigues.

He would not call on Margaret to testify against Ingle, though perhaps Margaret might not appreciate this consideration. He was confident he would be able to obtain plenty of testimony from other sources. Thomas Greene, for instance, and Henry Lee, John Halfhead, Cyprian Thoroughgood, John Price, Henry Bishop, Robert Vaughan; yes, there were any number of witnesses he might call who had privately and frequently reported Ingle's inflammatory and treasonable utterances to him.

And yet, he paused. To arrest one here for treason against the tottering crown of King Charles? This was a serious step. But Giles could not forget his oath to "defend and maintain to the uttermost of my power all his Lordship's just rights . . ." and further, to resist and oppose to the utmost of his power any encroachment of those rights.

It was Henry Bishop, responding to Giles' summons, who "deposed and said" against Ingle, giving enough information to justify a charge of treason. This sworn statement in hand, on the 18th of January, the sheriff Parker being temporarily absent from St. Maries, Giles handed a warrant to his deputy William Hardige "to arrest Richard Ingle upon highe treason." To protect himself against future criticism, Giles took particular pains in his own handwriting to note on the official record that this action had met with the full approval of his Lordship's attorney, Mr. Secretary Lewger.

Hardige eagerly took upon himself the prompt execution of the warrant. He was the local tailor, and harbored a personal grudge against the master of the *Reformation*. Ingle had given him much work at the time of his arrival in the colony, but to date he had declined to pay a single bill. When Hardige had pressed for payment, Ingle, safe aboard the *Reformation*, had threatened to cut off his head. That it should now fall to him to arrest this slippery customer, even though he must share the privilege with Captain Cornwaleys, seemed imminently just. In giving the Captain a warrant to aid Hardige "and to keep it secret, etc." Giles had conformed to custom and normal procedure in such cases, setting aside his personal doubts and misgivings of the Captain's loyalty.

From the founding of the colony, Cornwaleys had always been a molder of public opinion; his arbitration was constantly sought because his zeal and devotion to the public good were so plainly evident. But the previous September when the Assembly met, Cornwaleys had refused the customary oath offered the Councillors; and gave no reason for his refusal. Further, in last summer's expedition against the Susquehannocks, the Captain had met crushing defeat, losing to the enemy a quantity of arms and ammunition which could ill be spared. He had offered no excuses, no apology, and appeared to have no regrets. Giles bitterly reflected that for less, he, himself, had been charged with sedition! Now the Captain publicly referred to this, his first military defeat, as a good joke on himself.

Since the arrival of the *Reformation* the Captain had noticeably cultivated the company of her master, and Ingle, for his part, had accepted lavish hospitality at Cross Manor. But even so, the general public as a whole was loath to suspect the Captain of any disloyalty.

Not so, Mary Brent.

"I think the Captain has serious intentions," Margaret had once suggested.

"Serious?" Mary had replied, "About me? Ridiculous. The Captain would want a vivacious young wife. I would merely be a dependable housekeeper."

"Then for pity's sake discourage him," Margaret had advised. If she would not consider Leonard's serious intentions because it

would mean separation from Mary, why should Mary . . . 'but hold,' ordered her conscience, 'you well know if you *wanted* to marry . . .' Margaret sighed.

"The Captain amuses me," she heard Mary say, "but I shall not let him broach marriage."

But one evening shortly after his defeat by the Susquehannocks, the Captain did propose marriage to Mary, and she flared up instantly.

"You, Captain?" She was flustered and angry. "You who consort with Ingle, you who laugh at a defeat, you who flaunt the oath of Councillor, you! . . ."

The Captain's face flushed crimson. What business was all this of a mere woman?

"You ask me, a Brent, to marry *you*!" Mary had stormed on indignantly. "You, who by every indication, are becoming openly disaffected to my Lord Baltimore's colony. . . ."

"Now, Mary," the Captain had temporized, "expediency, you know."

"Expediency!" The word came scorching Mary's lips. "What of honor, sir? Your proposal to me is an outrage, an insult!"

Naturally the Captain made a rapid, though orderly, retreat from this unexpected fire. For her part, Mary was a nervous wreck for a week. Strong emotion, above all temper indulged without restraint, was an unusual experience for her.

It had probably not occurred to Mary, whose habit was to abide by the letter as well as the spirit of the law, to try to understand Cornwaleys' attitude; and perhaps the Captain, himself, could not have satisfactorily explained it, even to himself. He knew he quite honestly questioned whether Giles would bring valid charges against Ingle. Cornwaleys was aware of Ingle's observations and realized they were tinged with treason, but might they not be merely the indiscreet vaporings of a partisan of Parliament? Were they "formal" enough to be treason? Cornwaleys had much faith in free speech, free conscience, free opinion. It might take a higher court than that of Maryland to determine whether Ingle had abused the privilege of free speech. "Is license treason?" Often this question may have crossed Cornwaleys' thoughts. Or had Ingle persuaded Cornwaleys that the King's cause was hope-

lessly lost? Whatever the facts or motives, it was evident that Cornwaleys' heart was not in the task Giles had assigned him.

If Mary did not consider these points, Giles did. Since Cornwaleys' loyalty had not been openly challenged, Giles decided the Captain should take charge of Ingle's arrest.

Then Giles proceeded with the next step which was the preparation of a proclamation. In due order this was posted on the faithful mulberry tree:

I do hereby require (in his Majesty's name) Richard Ingle, mariner, to yield his body to the sheriff of this county, before the first day of February next to answer to such crimes of treason as on his Majesty's behalf shall be objected against him. And I do further require that all persons that can say or disclose any matter of treason against the said Richard Ingle, to inform his Lordship's attorney of it at some time before the said Court to the end it may then and there be prosecuted. G. Brent.

As fate would have it, Ingle, himself, was among the throng which gathered about the tree to read the latest "news"; and so was Henry Bishop. This gentleman remarked to his neighbor, "Aye, I've already said my say." It was a mistake. Ingle overheard him.

Pushing his way through the crowd to Bishop's side, Ingle knocked him senseless to the ground. As Bishop lay thus at his feet, Ingle kicked him mercilessly with his heavy boot; like corn from a popper, Bishop's teeth shot from his mouth.

Then Ingle turned upon the crowd:

"The same to any lying, papist scoundrel who dares to open his mouth against me," he cried, "and a plague upon you. Fire to your homes and crops, death to all of you!"

With that he walked away.

It was ten days later before he "permitted" Cornwaleys and Hardige to arrest him, then treating the whole incident as an amusing diversion.

But Giles was serious. In the interim he had caused another proclamation to be nailed to the mast of the *Reformation*:

These are to publish & pclayme to all psons as well as seamen as others that Richard Ingle Mr of this ship is arrested upon bigne treason to his Maty & therefore to require all psons to be aiding & assisting to his Lops officer in the seising of this ship, & not to offer any resistance or contempt thereto nor be any otherwaies aiding or assisting to the said R. Ingle, upon pill of bigne treason to his Maty.

Cornwaleys placed John Hampton aboard the *Reformation* with a handful of St. Maries' militia to enforce this order; but a dark rumor had it that Ingle, himself, was being entertained at Resurrection Manor, Cornwaleys' up-country estate.

The only jail then extant in the colony was the sheriff's "two hands." Parker, having now returned to the City was therefore host to Ingle and Cornwaleys when the latter brought the "prisoner" from an initial session of the Court. James Neale, Councillor, also accompanied them to Parker's house. Hardige had assisted in the arrest a day or two previously, but had not yet collected his bill.

But Giles was meeting frustration. Hardige willingly had given testimony, but try as he might, after the outrage upon Bishop, not one of the many who formerly had been loquacious on the subject would now give sworn statements against Ingle. Without exception one and all answered "Ignoramus." Then Giles strongly suspected Cornwaleys of duplicity; but he could prove nothing.

Ingle, meanwhile, was confident the whole matter would fall through. Now, comfortable before Parker's hearth, he said:

"Peculiar thing, gentlemen, what ridiculous notions are hatched in the wilderness! But, there, your company is pleasant enough until the next ship or so arrives from England with representatives of Parliament aboard who will soon take over and put matters in regular order here. As you must know the Lord Baltimore no longer has claim here. All his lands and rights have been confiscated by Cromwell. Parliament is appointing a new government."

"So?" said James Neale. "You seem quite sure, Master Ingle." "Naturally, as English subjects," said Cornwaleys, draining his

mug of ale, smacking his lips and wiping the froth from his mustache with the back of his hand, meantime with a cautious eye upon Parker, "we are loyal to whatever government maintains in the homeland. But here we are out of touch with developments and must, as you say, Ingle, await orders."

"I have some papers in my locker aboard the *Reformation*," said Ingle wryly with a meaning look for Cornwaleys, "which would convince you beyond a doubt of what I have told you."

"And why have you not brought them ashore before this?" asked James Neale.

"We till the soil first, do we not?" asked Ingle with an ingratiating smile. "And, too, gentlemen, excepting yourselves of course, I must admit I had hoped to land among friends."

"You are among friends," said the Captain with a trace of reproach in his voice. Then in measured tones, he went on, "I should very much like to see those papers. Would you trust me with the key to that locker? Perhaps, the Governor, himself, might examine your documents with profit. Then the — er — current unpleasantness, shall we say, might be dispensed with."

Cornwaleys did not note the glint of triumph in Ingle's eye as the latter smiled, and replied, "My good Captain, there is no man in this province I would trust more than yourself, but the key I cannot give you without I also give you myself. See," he went on, removing his waistcoat and thus releasing the frill at his left wrist, "no man can get the key from me without taking my hand as well."

"Plain as day," said James Neale.

Ingle was holding up his wrist. About it was a bracelet of iron from which suspended a small iron key most probably, the Captain noticed, of a size to fit a small sea locker. Only a smith, and then with some pain to Ingle, could remove it.

"And yet," Ingle was saying, realizing now he was undisputed master of the situation, "I assure you gentlemen it is a pity that the Governor has seen fit to offer me such hostility. For indeed, were he possessed of the information I could supply on documentary evidence, he might be but gently stripped of his power. Now he has laid himself open to violence."

Ingle laughed a little as he put his waistcoat on again and took

time to arrange the frills at his wrists. "You gentlemen have shown me hospitality and friendship," he said buttoning the coat, "but the Governor you may well imagine can scarce give eye nor ear to the evidence I have in my locker if he would maintain his power. But, mark well my words, it will not be for long."

"Your story has a false note," interrupted Cornwaleys. Ingle looked at him sharply. "A prudent man," the Captain went on, "would have come ashore armed with these documents at his first landing, no matter the circumstances he might find. You have now been long among us. One might think you speak of forgeries in your possession."

"A prudent man, eh, Captain?" Ingle replied, stalling for time and restraining the indignation within him. "Perhaps, perhaps. But if I had come to rule this province? Would I not then choose my own time? But, there," he went on now, his mind made up, "that has not been my intention. I am merely to pave the way for the rule of Parliament which will follow me here. I ask you, Captain, did I not act prudently to come ashore, mingle with you here, and discover, if I could, a prudent man who might be trusted with Parliamentary documents of a confidential nature; biding his time, mind you, to bring them to light at the proper moment?"

"Um," admitted Cornwaleys, "you might be right."

"Master Ingle has moved with marked wisdom," put in James Neale.

"Have you, in your long stay here, found that prudent man?" asked Cornwaleys then.

Ingle looked silently from one to the other, thoughtfully turning his pewter mug in his large rough hands.

"Here, here," said Parker as though suddenly coming to life, "let me fill that for you."

"And another log on the fire," said James Neale, lifting a heavy one with both hands and throwing it into the hearth, causing a multitude of flames and sparks to shoot up the chimney. "There's a nip in the air these January nights."

Cornwaleys had made no move. He sat studying Ingle silently while the others saw to his comfort. Now, as the new log began to crackle and spit he asked again, "Have you found the 'prudent' man?"

"Yes," acknowledged Ingle in a mysterious tone, "I think I have. I am sure of it. It is time, too, to show this man my documents which only this," he added pointing to his wrist, "can reveal."

The two men gazed steadily at each other.

"Who is the man?" asked James Neale, now, breaking the spell.

"That I cannot reveal while I am held prisoner," said Ingle, aiming for high stakes now. "I will cordially admit, however, that you gentlemen are jolly jailers." And he laughed more than the jest warranted. The others joined in, and then gave swift attention to their mugs of ale. In this brief interval Ingle looked at the Captain and found the latter's eyes upon him. Ever so slightly Ingle raised an eyebrow and nodded at him.

Taking this cue, on a gamble, Cornwaleys said, "After all, gentlemen, it is unseemly for us to question a representative of Parliament in this fashion. We are prying into secret state affairs, perhaps, which do not concern us. Can we be sure our 'guest' is direct from Parliament if we do not examine his credentials? Confidentially, mind you. If they be what he says they are, then, by Jove, gentlemen, regardless of what he thinks of your hospitality, Parker, we have no right to be a party to his detention."

"Why not examine the credentials?" asked James Neale.

"Why not?" echoed the Captain, looking at Ingle.

"Gladly, aboard the *Reformation*," agreed Ingle.

"But . . ." protested Parker, seeing an escape from his "two hands" in the making.

"A mere formality, Mr. Parker," reassured James Neale.

"Well," hesitated Parker, "if you, a member of the Council . . ."

"Think nothing of it," advised Cornwaleys, "there is a knot which must be untied."

"Most prudent, Captain, most prudent," put in Ingle, adopting a disarmingly far-away look and tone. He made no move to leave his chair.

"Suppose we all go along to the ship," suggested the Captain.

"In prudence, indeed, I had better go with you," replied Parker.

"And welcome, I'm sure," said James Neale, looking at Ingle for approval. But Ingle was studying a knot in a pine beam overhead.

Dusk came early in January and so the small party made its way to the river-landing without being noticed by the few who were abroad. Giles, at that time, was at the Freehold, relating the day's events to his sisters. Parker untied the *Reformation's* shore boat, and the four men rowed out to the ship which was gently riding the outgoing tide.

As the small party approached the hull, John Hampton's voice rang out in the darkness, "Ahoy! Who goes there?"

"Friend," called the Captain, "disarm your guard, all is peace."

In the matter of a few moments then, the party was aboard the *Reformation*. In the darkness, Ingle found Cornwaleys' ear, and hissed, "Your service will not be forgotten, Captain. The Committee of Parliament will have a full report. A most prudent man, Captain. Trust me."

Before Cornwaleys could overcome his surprise, Ingle then shouted to a nearby seaman, "Remove that placard from the mast!" He referred to Giles' proclamation nailed there.

The seaman was one of Ingle's and naturally jumped to obey.

John Hampton protested.

But in the darkness another of his crew handed Ingle his cutlass which he now brandished, "All you dogs of papists, off this ship!" he ordered.

"Stand by!" shouted Hampton in counter order.

"Off," cried Ingle, wielding his weapon menacingly, his own crew now rising to his assistance and by blows and thrusts urging the Marylanders over the side. "Off," yelled Ingle again, "before I slither your papist heads from your rotten bodies."

At last Cornwaleys found his tongue.

"But the documents!" he protested.

But the confusion and noise was too much. The Captain was swept along with the tide of Marylanders now swarming over the side.

However, just before he slipped down the rope ladder, Ingle again found his ear and hissed, "I shall not forget the most prudent man in all the colony, Captain."

Giles and the Council, save James Neale, who took to his bed with an ailment his fellow Councillor Sir Thomas Gerard could not

diagnose, were furious. There could be no question now of recapturing Ingle. Aboard the *Reformation*, which was armed, he was quite safe. The Council lost no time in levying the heaviest fine yet imposed, 1000 pounds of tobacco, against the Captain, who in shame and mortification had retired to Cross Manor.

Now the many, both Catholic and Protestant, whose sympathies were still royalist, made their sentiments known throughout St. Maries, and overnight the Captain was knocked from his pedestal in popular regard and lay in the dust of his own pride.

A few days later, at dawn, Giles saw the *Reformation* which had remained impudently anchored off shore, set her sail and head southeast towards the sea. He heaved a sigh of relief. At last Ingle was departing. Probably, Giles thought, he had not posted his bail nor paid his customs, but that was a small price to pay to be rid of this disturber of the public peace and harmony.

A knock at his door turned his attention from the window. Hardige entered.

"Um," he said, "I see you 've observed the *Reformation*. Good riddance, I say. I came to tell you. And good riddance to Cornwaleys, too."

"Cornwaleys!" Giles was stunned. Quickly there flashed through his mind a sense of gratitude that he, at least, had paid his fine.

"The same," Hardige assured him. "He joined the ship an hour ago. Gone back to England he is, and Ingle too, and both of them owing me money."

Neither of them could know it would be nine years before the Captain would return to Maryland.

Ten

ALTHOUGH Margaret, in consultation with Tidd, gave her keen attention to the seasonal routine at Kent Fort Manor, the Freehold and the White House, she knew many moments of fearful misgiving as she reflected upon the events of late January and early February, 1643.

At last she could not refrain from discussing these with her brother.

"If Ingle was right — if Cromwell — if His Majesty's sun *is* setting — Oh, Giles, I am so fearful! What will become of our own in Gloucestershire? Of Cecilius? Of Maryland?"

"Ingle was a nasty, malicious liar," asserted Giles, saying what he wished to be true, not what he knew. As he spoke he viciously kicked a clod of newly turned earth at the edge of the tobacco field where they were walking.

"I hope he was," replied Margaret quickly, "but I am uneasy. Suppose — suppose he was not a liar? And you have accused him of high treason against His Majesty!"

"I assure you, had I not also questioned myself on this matter," replied Giles sympathetically, "it would take a seer to divine what you are driving at."

Margaret looked at him with an air of mild reproach.

"You are suggesting," Giles went on, "that by arresting an obvious partisan of the Parliament party for high treason against the King, I have irrevocably placed this province on the side of His Majesty."

"Yes, that is it precisely," acknowledged Margaret.

"Umph!" Giles pursed his lips and pulled at his Vandyke. "Given the facts and occasions —"

"I do not see how you could have done otherwise, *if* you have all

the facts," Margaret finished for him. "I do not mean to criticize or question. I have not even discussed this with Mary. But, Giles, for the first time since our coming here I — "

She cut short her speech and stopped in the path. So did Giles. For a long moment Margaret gazed across the newly planted fields which stretched before them. Giles saw that her eyes, always so clear and sparkling, were brimming with tears. He was astonished and annoyed. Astonished that Margaret, a tower of strength and fortitude, should be given to the womanly weakness of tears as well, and amazed that he seemed about to have a weeping woman on his hands. What does one do in the presence of a woman's tears?

But Margaret's tears remained glimmering in her eyes, they did not spill down her cheeks. She turned to him and in a hushed voice, her eyes searching his, she said, "Giles! I am so homesick and so afraid!"

Giles was grateful that she did not clutch him and cry aloud on his shoulder. But he sensed, too, that if Margaret admitted to being afraid, something indeed must be amiss with her. She did not scare easily, and only once before, when she was younger, could he remember seeing this sister give way to emotion. He very much wanted to take her in his arms and comfort her, instead, he pensively surveyed the manorial acres. When the silence between them seemed too heavy, he said:

"I know how you feel, sister. I worry, too."

They resumed their walk then, turning their steps back to the Manor house.

"As for the Ingle matter," Giles said presently, "of all who swore to me that he was a traitor only Bishop and Hardige would testify under oath. But what I have done is done, and Maryland, God help her, will have to stand by it. I am confident I was morally right."

"And I, too," agreed Margaret, "nor would I really have had you do otherwise. But — "

"But?" Giles looked at her with tender affection.

"But we came to Maryland so hopefully, leaving our own in fair peace, at least. Now what is to become of all of us?"

"Courage!" advised Giles, "we Brents do not whimper."

"No," admitted Margaret, "nor have we hearts of iron."

There was a long pause and then Margaret said, "I should dearly like to go back to England. Only for a visit, mind you, not to remain."

"'Tis a change you need, Margaret, and I, too, could do with one. What say you we pay a visit to Virginia — to Sir William? You know his Royalist leanings. It will be the next best play to a visit home."

Margaret's eyes lighted. She beamed at Giles.

"I should love it!" she exclaimed; but in the next breath she cautiously added, "Should you leave the Province, Giles?"

"I see no harm in a few weeks' change," he replied thoughtfully. "All is quiet at the moment. Even the Indians are busy with their planting. Ingle is gone, and the dissenters at Providence will be planting, too."

"But," said Margaret, "you will have to have a substantial and official reason to leave now, regardless of how likely a time you think it to be."

"You are right," replied Giles.

They walked together in silence for a time, both considering a weighty reason to cover their contemplated vacation.

"I could give it out that I am off to buy some horses," offered Giles presently.

"Acquisitiveness," scolded Margaret, "is no fit reason for apparent neglect of duty."

Giles did not reply. Margaret's complaint had no new flavor.

"I have a better idea," she said then.

"That might be a matter of opinion," replied Giles tauntingly, "but what is it?"

"Fathers Gilmett and Territt."

"Um," grunted Giles, interested. "The seculars Cecilius sent on the *Reformation*."

"Precisely," agreed Margaret. "They are impatiently looking for a ship back to England."

"That's right," said Giles quickly, "though I have tried to persuade them England is at present no hospitable place for Catholic priests."

"Nor is Virginia for that matter," cut in Margaret, "but there they might find a ship for Amsterdam or the Indies."

"Margaret you've a splendid idea there. How plausible that I should pay them the compliment of accompanying them to a safe departure."

"Of course it's a wonderful idea," countered Margaret jestingly, "my ideas usually are!" She paused to let the dart sink in, and then continued, "What about our own reception by Sir William? He loathes 'papists.'"

"Collectively, yes," admitted Giles, "but we are Brents, sons of the peerage. Sir William is a royalist. We have nothing to fear."

So it came about that on the 16th of April, Giles and Margaret, accompanied by Sir Thomas and Lady Gerard, and the two priests, took their departure for Virginia. At the most, Giles expected to return within a fortnight.

The party left from St. Clement's Manor, crossing the Potomac to Westmoreland County where lay the broad plantations of the Diggles and Addisons, the Claggetts, Smallwoods and Keys, the Carters, Marshalls, Fitzhughs, Mercers and Monroes.

By pre-arrangement, horses met them on the Virginia shore. As evening drew in, the party approached the plantation of the Puritan, Edward Digges. As was the custom of the times, Digges received the Marylanders with the traditional hospitality extended travellers of substance — in spite of the fact that they were Catholics including two priests in their party.

In fact, Digges' welcome was so cordial that it extended over the 17th, so it was not until mid-morning of the 18th that the party took its leave and turned south to James City.

In that brief twenty-four hours Giles and Margaret became enamoured of the Virginia shore. The Digges' house had a "private front" commanding a view of the river with Maryland in the distance. Its "formal front" comprised a great circular drive to the main entrance, which was bordered with English box and flanked by flower gardens offering a succession of mass bloom and color. No trees had been allowed to remain standing in front of the house but each side was generously flanked by monarch specimens. Flowering shrubs flourished against the white-washed brick walls, snow-balls and lilac, and a graceful wisteria caressed the stately entrance way.

A broad center hall divided the two-story house of only sixteen rooms. The ceilings were high, the furnishings English, and Margaret noted two Van Dycks on either wall of the great hall.

An inducement to remain over the 17th was the arrival that morning from Northumberland County of the Washingtons, whose young people were gathering here for one of the frequent house parties. By evening many others had come from neighboring plantations either by land or water. Youth thought nothing of sailing fifty miles for a dance or spending a day in the saddle to reach such an affair.

While Giles, the reverend fathers, Sir Thomas, their host, and others of their ages and dispositions sat the evening through on the "river-side" porch, Margaret joined the wall flowers' row in the company parlor where the younger set danced the night long. She did not mind in the least that she was now "too old" for this sort of frolicking; it was fun to live her youth again watching the coming generation. Its general carefree gaiety, the young ladies' clothes and high color, sent her memories whirling back to her teens and to the merry house parties at Admington Manor.

Sally Digges, her hostess, filled her ears with the countryside gossip and lamented the present ways of the outlandish younger generation. This seemed a fitting obbligato to the main attraction which held Margaret's fascinated attention.

"Umph!" grunted Sally, "there's young Helen Carter. Rubbed her cheeks with mullen leaf again, as though her own color were not bright enough! And look at Mary Lou's hair! Such a tower of glory with glistening curls cascading over each ear. They do say," Sally went on, raising her fan now to hide her lips, "that her father gave Mary Lou an indentured servant last Christmas who is really one of those immoral French hairdressers!"

Margaret raised an eyebrow because she felt Sally expected this, but she could not take her attention from the gay young people who danced before her.

"Tut! Tut!" Sally began anew, "Betsey Tuberville has on her mother's dress, or I am a papoose. The very same Dame Tuberville wore to Robert Morris' ball. Black velvet is much too old for such a young thing. And, Margaret, take note of Betsey's petticoat. Did ever white satin have such sheen and gloss? And

note that white feather plume in her hair! Umph! The very same, I do declare. Though as I recollect, her mother wore natural flowers and a cluster of diamonds on her bosom. Oh, do look at Mary Lee's gown — over there with young Washington. Muslin, isn't it? But the ruffles! Oh, mercy me, the ruffles! They look like the assorted emptyings of her bureau drawers, not set to rights for a decade at that."

Next day with cordial expressions of gratitude and gay farewells the Marylanders turned their horses south. They crossed the Rappahannock by raft at Tappahannock and paused the night at Chelsea on the York River, home of Edward Hill. Hill, himself, was at James City on colonial business, but his lady graciously received the travellers. Outwardly here, too, hospitality was cordial and extravagant; but the guests were not at ease. Dame Hill soon let it be known that her husband was friend and confidant of Bennett, master-mind of Providence, and the pestiferous Clayborne, whose moves grew bolder with each Cromwellian victory. But in this very atmosphere the Maryland party was doomed to spend two long weeks in which time the veneer of conventional hospitality grew very thin.

Opechancanough was the cause of this long delay. Though then ninety years old, he had led his warriors down the James on the 18th, with such bravado that on the evening of that day three hundred and fifty of Virginia's twenty thousand colonists were slain. A haggard, travel-stained Hill brought this news back to Chelsea in the early dawn of the 19th. He insisted further travel by his unexpected guests could not be risked until word came of Opechancanough's death which he expected momentarily. Giles wanted then to return to Maryland, even if he had to hire a shallop and go by water. But in the circumstances, Hill would hear of no such adventure-and for once Giles bowed to another's will.

He and Sir Thomas found small comfort in the news that Clayborne was now leading an army of Virginians against the Pamunckies. Such warfare might further delay their departure. It had been their past experience that Clayborne cheerfully stirred a tempest, but always fled the scene before a real battle; as a result, the tempest remained restless indefinitely due to lack of decisive leader-

ship. So, when word came at the end of April, that Clayborne claimed to have captured Powathan's evil brother Opechancanough, the Maryland party was very skeptical, but the news gave them a chance to move.

Unfortunately, perhaps, just as they were prepared to leave to return to Maryland, a message came for Giles from Sir William Berkeley, who had belatedly learned of their presence in his colony. More, Sir William sent an escort to accompany the party to his estate, Middle Plantation, not far from James City. The party was relieved to leave Chelsea, from whence host and hostess bade them a gracious God-speed which Margaret felt to be hollow formality, but they all would have been happier to have turned north rather than south, as courtesy now demanded.

Passing through Kequutan on the north shore of the James, Giles learned that Captain Henry Fleete had pressed men from this section to join Clayborne against the Pamunkies. None commented on this information, but all recalled that long ago Father White had openly questioned an apparently convenient friendship between these two. Lately, a concern of the Maryland Council was the current rumor that, because of his knowledge of the Indian dialects, Clayborne had engaged Fleete to keep the Susquehannocks aroused against the Lord Baltimore's colony.

Kequutan was the least impressive of the Virginia settlements which the Marylanders had seen. Its sole distinction was rooted in the existence there of the Virginia estate and manor of the Secretary of State and Treasurer of Virginia, William Clayborne. But Margaret was not aware of this fact. She only knew a strange, inexplicable premonition that she would visit Kequutan again, but in circumstances most unhappy. She tried to dismiss this presentiment as foolish fancy, but it persisted and depressed her as long as she remained in Virginia.

As the Marylanders approached the outskirts of James City an impressive group rode forward to meet them. There were ten horsemen, uniformed as British light dragoons. No doubt an escort of honor thought Margaret and felt flattered by this attention to their party. Each man of the escort wore a white tunic and blue-gaitered breeches. The tunics were elaborately decorated with

gold lace and cords circling the sleeve at the right shoulder. Their steel helmets, embellished with long horsehair tails, sparkled in the bright sunlight.

Margaret, smiling and pleased, turned in her saddle to comment to Lady Gerard, but the grave and forbidding expression on her brother's face as he spoke to Sir Thomas, checked her.

"Do my eyes deceive me?" he asked, his cheeks flushing.

"If so, mine own are likewise afflicted," responded Sir Thomas.

"This could have the aspect of an outright insult!"

Margaret and Lady Gerard exchanged mystified glances. The reverend Fathers appeared interested but at ease.

It was not the ten light dragoons, riding easily but with marked dignity, which disturbed Giles and Sir Thomas, but their leader. Astride a snow white horse, dressed in rich black which was relieved by stock and ruffled cuffs of dazzling white, one hand resting on the hilt of his sword, the other loosely holding the silver studded, white leather reins, the leader of the welcoming escort was unmistakably a figure familiar to the gentlemen of Maryland.

Presently the two groups were within hailing distance, and the Maryland party drew rein.

"Greetings and salutations!" called the leader of the dragoons, "and His Excellency's compliments."

The Maryland party bowed stiffly. The horsemen halted. Only their leader continued to advance.

"In the name of our Governor, Sir William Berkeley, I extend you welcome to Virginia," he said.

"As well you stress it be in the name of Sir William," said Giles, eyeing the Virginian intently.

"It would be unlikely for you thus to speak for yourself," added Sir Thomas.

Margaret shook her head in amazement, and raised a questioning eye to Lady Gerard and the two priests.

"'Tis a small matter," admitted the Virginian sarcastically.

Now that he had come to a halt beside her brother, Margaret could not miss the hatred in the eyes of the Virginian. She recalled that papists were not welcome here, and knew an impulse to turn about and escape Virginia as quickly as possible.

"Sir William awaits your party at Middle Plantation," informed

the leader of the escort now, "and you will be aware of the honor he bestows upon your presence by sending me forth to extend his welcome."

"Perhaps," said Sir Thomas tersely.

"I grant His Excellency a good intention," said Giles, "only because on this soil we are, first, English gentlemen. . . ."

"Always English gentlemen," said the Virginian, bowing low in his saddle. As he sat upright again, his eyes for an instant rested upon Margaret.

"Your fascinating and charming sister?" he asked.

"My sister," nodded Giles. "Come, we tarry here too long."

At that he jerked his reins, and the Virginian turned about quickly to keep abreast with Giles and Sir Thomas.

"Open ranks!" he shouted to the horsemen ahead. At the command they parted, five on either side of the roadway, and as the Maryland party rode through this small aisle, the horsemen saluted smartly.

Both ladies were confused. They could not understand the aloofness of the Maryland gentlemen, yet this attention to their party was a pleasant experience. They went forward in silence.

"I am not aware that Sir William anticipated clerics in your party," said the leader of the dragoons, as these now closed ranks and brought up the rear of the procession. "And why, may I ask, two clerics? Would not one suffice for four laymen?"

Margaret despised the vitriolic attitude of this spokesman on the white horse, and knew a great uneasiness, too.

"Our priests," Giles retorted, "seek a ship to remove them from this continent."

"Indeed!" bowed the Virginian, his face breaking into a leering smile, "as well, my friend, as well. It happens at this moment there is a Dutch merchantman in our waters, presently returning to Amsterdam via New Amsterdam. I will seek accommodations for these undesirables."

"Hold your tongue!" shouted Sir Thomas.

"I will arrange the accommodations," barked Giles.

Margaret looked at the Fathers, her eyes showing the pain she suffered for the insults to them. But the priests, reared in an atmosphere of persecution and hatred, smiled at her.

"Do not be distressed," said Father Gilmett.

"Remember our Master was despised before us," added Father Territt.

"I do not like this situation," replied Margaret, and pulling on her reins she urged her horse to gain Giles' side.

"Giles," she said, "who is this bedecked Virginian, coming to us in the name of Sir William, insulting members of our party. Who is he?"

Giles looked at her impatiently.

"I wish you would re-join Lady Gerard," he retorted, "this impudent individual is not fit company for you, Margaret."

The "impudent individual" smiled at Margaret, and though his eyes squinted almost shut, as his pudgy face screwed up in the smile, Margaret felt those eyes searching her person.

Giles looked from one to the other.

"Come," he ordered Margaret, digging his heels into his horse, "ride forward with me, now. This person is William Clayborne."

"Clayborne!" Margaret was stunned.

"A pleasure, madam," bowed Clayborne, keeping pace with Giles and his sister.

"A distinct *displeasure*," snapped Margaret, and holding her chin in the air, she turned her eyes straight ahead. The party entered James City in heavy silence.

There, acting for the Lord Baltimore, Giles arranged passage for Fathers Gilmitt and Territt, and the entire Maryland party remained in the City until the priests were aboard the merchant vessel and safely out to sea, as well.

The Gerards and the Brents would have gladly turned back to St. Maries then, but William Clayborne insisted Sir William expected them immediately at Middle Plantation. Margaret would have turned in any direction to escape the company of this enemy of Maryland. Captain Clayborne left them at the entrance to Sir William's lands.

"Your company has been a pleasure," he bowed, addressing the four of them, "an honor and a distinction to have been appointed to welcome such distinguished guests," he added with mock politeness. "It might interest you to know that all will be well in your Province while you tarry here. Captain Fleete has returned

to his Maryland manor. A most reliable military man!"
Clayborne and Fleet! Margaret was miserable with anxiety.
"We will stay but a day or two at the most," Giles reassured her.

It was already the fifteenth of June.

Margaret, lazy as a fly on a lily pad, lay between the cool linen sheets in the tremendous bed which faced the southern windows of the high ceilinged guest chamber at Middle Plantation. Unlike a fly, however, she had a conscience which this morning seemed to be suffering from prickly heat.

First thing on waking — even before she opened her eyes, conscience said, 'You should have been home six weeks ago.'

Impatiently, she turned over then, hoping to sink back into blissful oblivion; but, again, only to find that sleep had drifted out the window on the soft June air to approach the slaves in the fields, perhaps, or the carriage dogs in the barnyard, or even the cook now already drowsy though still methodically plucking chickens for Sir William's ever groaning board.

Visiting at Middle Plantation had at first seemed the best substitute she could conceive for a visit to Larke Stoke. Contrary to her preliminary misgivings, Sir William had welcomed them most cordially in spite of their Catholicity; because he, of all the colonists who knew Giles had ousted Ingle from Maryland, heartily approved.

Sitting on the edge of the bed now, Margaret began to realize for the first time how arduous her days and nights had been for the last half dozen years; devoted to building, creating, molding a new life from raw materials; to gaining revenue from her land, to the acquisition and development of more and yet more land. She had been intent, too, upon the civic and social growth of Maryland; intent upon everything foreign to leisure and self-indulgence. Now, these past few weeks, she had actually enjoyed "being a lady." It had been good to be waited upon hand and foot. It had been good to revert to that gracious living to which she was born. 'How could I ever have found such an existence a bore?' she asked herself. The niceties of convention had relaxed her. "Being a lady" she admitted had its compensations.

Now the negro maid, Clarissa, was preparing her bath (in a

round wooden tub). And presently Margaret found herself therein, lathering her body with soap made on Middle Plantation and entrancingly scented with lilac. Three Negroes waited upon her. Two gently poured pitchers of lukewarm water over her, another stood by, bath sheet in hand waiting for her to step from the tub. Yesterday she had been a little clumsy and had got a splinter in her toe.

Returning to her room, still another slave had laid out her clothes. Willing black hands helped with fastenings; others wound and tied the ribbons of her best black shoes which in these weeks she had worn morning, noon and night, when not in the saddle or walking with Sir William over his endless acres now lush with wild azalea and Judas blooms.

Margaret submitted supinely to every service, save one. Her hair, still titian, still cropped and curly, she dressed herself.

'Come, now,' prodded her conscience, as she meekly held out her arm for the sleeve of her gown, 'aren't you a bit sick of this pampering?'

Margaret had thought she would never sicken of it, but in spite of herself, she resentfully realized that conscience was beginning to have success — was spoiling the entire scene for her.

Six weeks!

'Umph!' sighed Margaret, 'that is too long a time. We must go home.'

But then there was the Widow Trippot! What a woman! Among the wealthiest in the colony, owner of thousands of acres and admittedly the best stables in the English colonies; young, vivacious, childless and sugary sweet. Giles had been completely swept off his feet by Melinda Trippot. Could this rich young widow wean him from his avowed intention of marrying Mary Kittamaquaand?

'There,' said Margaret to her conscience, 'that is one reason why I have consented to dally here beyond all reasonable time. A worthy motive, you must admit.'

"I admit no excuses," retorted her conscience sternly. "Giles is shrewd and a good mathematician. He will marry the Princess of the Piscataways."

Margaret frowned. Conscience was probably right.

Musing by the open window, she came to realize, too, that she was very weary of Sir William. His attentions were so overplayed. She had been supine in the face of the favor her host enjoyed at Court. He had been royal Commissioner for Canada, and privy chamberlain, too. A good friend for the Maryland colony to cultivate, Margaret had thought.

This was why she had indulged his every whim and opinion. What a good listener she had been, wholly submerging her more and more frequent moments of boredom while in his company. There was that day when he had read her his tragi-comedy *The Lost Lady*. She had obligingly wept and laughed at the proper places, while not at all surprised that such a lifeless pen and ink lady was lost.

Now, however, Margaret admitted to herself, she had had enough. She was not disposed to take another six weeks to pull herself and Giles out of Middle Plantation; she restrained an impelling desire to seek out her brother and leave at once. She knew that convention would frown on such an action. She could only stew now in reflection and lay plans for a graceful exit, which, alas, would take time!

Young, handsome, charming, gallant — these attributes she had to allow her host. But the cruelty of him. The day at James City now pressed forward in her memory, almost sickening her.

He had told her she was fascinating, had flattered her beyond all reason. And her vanity, which had been starved for so long, had accepted it all. On the other hand, she had had so many opportunities to note Sir William's intolerance, his stubborn pride and willfulness, his unbearable arrogance — but more than all these qualities, she recalled his cruelty.

"Is it to be a trial?" she had asked him that mid-May morning when they set out for James City. "Or is it a meeting of your — how do you describe it — "

"House of Burgesses?" supplied Sir William. He laughed. "Oh, ho! Not that, milady. That is too dull — too much like Maryland, eh? No, Mistress Margaret, this is something very special. Indeed, I doubt such a case has been tried hereabouts in twenty years."

"Then it *is* going to be a trial," Margaret insisted.

"My fair lady! A trial, eh? Well, in a manner of speaking you might say yes, but I have already rendered the verdict though I have not yet seen the prisoner. Ah!" he went on, smacking his lips, "to lay my eyes upon that — Milady," he abruptly changed his tempo and tone, "you are going to witness an application of Scriptural justice."

Margaret, as Sir William had wished, had been duly puzzled by his cryptic words, but she offered no further questions. In due time all would be revealed.

James City still wore the scars of the Indian visitation of April 18th. At that time a friendly native had warned the city, so it was now known, but despite alert defenders the attack had been sudden and furious. Charred buildings blazed their route, and here and there a patch of blackened woodland stood gaunt and naked beside those trees which had not been touched and were now resplendently decked in delicate spring-green finery.

In a square before the Established Church, wherein the Virginia Assembly most frequently met, were the usual implements of colonial chastisement: stocks, pillory, whipping post, and off to one side, the gallows.

Margaret noticed immediately another contraption which she learned was a "bird cage." A stout reinforced structure, she now noted with horror that it contained a human form; so still, as they approached, she wondered if it were alive. The dimensions of the "cage" were such that a man could neither stand, sit, nor lie down.

Margaret turned to Sir William to ask about the occupant of the "cage." Seeing the expression on her face, the Governor laughed aloud before she could speak.

"Looks damn uncomfortable, doesn't he?" he roared and Margaret saw for the first time the cold steel of his eyes and the sickening leer of his smile. "Know who that is? Ah, a prize I have saved for milady to see," Sir William went on, still laughing too heartily. His eyes seemed to protrude now, his face was crimson, his long, thin nose quivered like a dog's scenting prey, his teeth glistened.

Giles came riding up then, with the Widow Trippot.

"Ah," he said, "what have you there, Sir William?"

The Widow Trippot's face, Margaret could not help noticing,

reflected shock and horror, but seemed poised to laugh or weep as soon as a cue was given her.

Sir William sat straight in his saddle. "There, my friends," he announced arrogantly, "is the scourge of Virginia — Opechan-canough!"

Silently, the foursome dismounted.

The gentlemen walked towards the cage. Margaret and the Widow remained in the background. At a cautious distance, Sir William halted. Then Margaret saw the true measure of the Governor of Virginia.

With all the hatred she had ever seen in a human face, Sir William and the Indian exchanged glances. The Widow Trippot limply clung to Margaret's arm.

"That beast! That devil from hell!" she breathed. "Death is too easy for him."

"His own people apply torture first," replied Margaret coldly.

She wanted to pry loose from this woman, but she remained motionless at her side. She concentrated her attention upon the miserable figure which Sir William had insisted was Opechan-canough. From where she stood she could see that his body was encrusted with filth, that his dirty stringy hair was matted, and that here and there it stuck fast to his neck and face, pulling the skin if he moved ever so slightly. She also noted that, added to his bodily discomfort, he suffered the agony of having his large powerful hands securely bound behind his back, and that the leather thongs were almost invisible around his dirty, swollen and bloody wrists. His lip had been cut. The blood had dried and crusted over the swelling.

Margaret retreated. Even at a distance, she realized the stench from this creature was more than she could stomach.

A platform had been erected in front of the entrance to the Church. Presently Sir William and Giles escorted the ladies to it. Margaret was seated to the right of the Governor, Giles on his left, and the Widow beyond. Never in all her life had Margaret known such revulsion, such repugnance for the position she now occupied and the company she shared. The whole populace of James City flanked the three visible sides of the clearing. Margaret wanted to fly in shame, but she could only remain where

she was, to see this whole horrible business through to its gruesome conclusion.

Two guards, at a signal from Sir William, opened the cage and roughly pulled the helpless prisoner out. Margaret did not know that he had been thus imprisoned for seven long days. His body struck the hard earth with a sickening thud. He did not move, did not even attempt to stretch out one painful limb. Seeing this, the guards cruelly prodded him with the butts of their guns. Sir William, meanwhile in a great voice, urged them to bring the prisoner forward: "Make him walk!" he cried.

At the sound of the Governor's voice, the old Indian raised his eyes to the platform where sat the white men. The sight was more effective, it appeared, than all the rain of blows the guards showered upon him.

Slowly he began of his own power to move. Despite his tremendous pride, his face was distorted with pain. Humiliation crowned his efforts, too, for with hands bound and muscles brittle and stiff from long confinement, he could not of his own power gain his feet; the guards had to help.

Once on his feet, however, and with a visibly tremendous effort he pulled his aged frame to its full height and stretched his gaunt neck to carry his head even higher. His progress towards the platform, flanked by the two vigilant guards was slow, true, but it had all the pomp and dignity of his race. Margaret marveled at his courage, his great height, and when he momentarily stumbled and almost fell, an agonized "Oh!" escaped her tight lips.

Hearing it, Sir William turned towards her, glowered for a moment, and then resumed his observation of his prisoner.

Now the small procession was perhaps thirty feet from the platform. Berkeley raised his hand. The prisoner and the guards halted.

The stillness of a primeval forest descended upon the scene. Helpless, aged, a cornered beast obviously suffering great pain, but immensely, gloriously proud, the Indian faced his human judge. Berkeley's hand was still raised.

Never in all her life had Margaret wanted so to speak. A mere matter of convention had never before stood in her way when her sense of justice was outraged. Nor did it now. She opened her

mouth to cry a protest, but the cry did not come. Her dry tongue clung to her palate. She tried to rise, but her body was such a leaden weight she could not move. She felt literally petrified. Her eyes never left the Indian. Through her mind over and over ran the remembrance that God had created him — that this savage had a soul, as precious to God as her own — a man, "In His image and likeness" — God's handiwork. Ugly. Yes, fiendishly ugly. But as the old Indian now stood proud in his humiliation before the Governor, Margaret was keenly aware of the nobility of the red man, and the dignity of this great warrior.

So casually that Margaret was barely aware of it, Sir William dropped his hand. That was the signal. Instantly the two guards fired upon the Indian, point blank. His tremendous frame stiffened for a split second, then with a resounding thud, crumpled lifeless to the ground. His two guards rushed to his corpse, kicked it and crushed the skull with the butts of their guns.

Sir William turned to his guests.

"Disappointing, isn't it?" he asked, "too swift. How about it, Giles," he went on, placing his hand on the other's shoulder, "how would it be done in Maryland? As mercifully and in such a Christian manner?"

Giles looked away, and did not answer.

"Ah, well," said Sir William, turning then to the ladies, "so justice prevails in Virginia. No time consuming details to keep the Governor from his charming guests. A sight to remember, eh, Mistress Margaret?"

At the following session of the Assembly, Sir William insisted that Virginia vote the last Wednesday of every month a day of fasting and humiliation "to the end that God might avert His many judgments from the colony"; and thereafter every year April 18th, the anniversary of the James City massacre, was appointed an annual day of Thanksgiving.

Towards the end of the third week in June the Brents and Gerards took their departure from Middle Plantation and turned homeward. As a parting gift Sir William gave Giles a grant of five thousand acres in Westmoreland County. So it was, on their homeward way, Giles paused long enough to select a site for this

grant; and to quiet Margaret's impatience over this further delay, he gave her two-fifths of the land in her own name.

Margaret accepted the gift, but Giles chafed to note it in no way decreased her impatience.

Eleven

ONE morning, while Margaret and Giles were away, Mary Brent joined John Lewger as he was mounting his horse in front of the chapel.

"May I ride a way with you, John?" she asked pleadingly. Her expression plainly showed that she was worried. Lewger could readily guess the cause of her anxiety, and was also glad of her company because he needed Mary's help in a delicate and distasteful situation.

Since the difficulties between King and Parliament had grown so ominous, attendance at daily Mass had increased enormously in the Province, and now both Mr. Secretary and Mistress Mary Brent were occupied acknowledging "Good mornings" and other small pleasantries about the weather and the coming crops of corn and tobacco.

So it was they reached the path at the edge of Middle Street which led through woodland and open fields, first to Giles' White House and thence to the Freehold.

"I am beside myself with concern," said Mary as both drew rein. "John," she begged, "I know Captain Fleete has come recently from Virginia. And I hear there was a terrible massacre at James City just when Giles and Margaret were due to arrive there. Tell me — "

"Fleete knew nothing of their whereabouts," Lewger informed her, almost harshly. He appeared very distant and cold.

"What can have happened?" cried Mary. "They should have returned the first of May. Here it is the first week of June."

"I see nothing to be done, Mary, but wait. You know your brother. He will indulge his pleasure regardless of duty."

"Could you not send someone to fetch them back?" begged Mary.

"And interfere with Giles' recreation?" asked Lewger disdainfully. "Hardly, Mary, could I do that."

"But they may not even be alive!"

"News of their death would be a sensation, and would have reached us ere this."

Mary looked at him with mingled contempt and pride.

"No doubt you are right," she said, superficially cool. Inwardly she deeply resented Lewger's slurs. "It is an old Brent custom to believe no news is good news."

"Giles should exercise his conscience," complained Lewger impatiently. "He has a responsibility here."

"I was not aware you were the judge of his conscience," countered Mary crossly. "Giles has some good cause," she went on loyally, "and I wish you might have more confidence in him. Why are you always so bitter?"

"At the present," Lewger answered her as his eyes avoided hers and scanned the lush countryside, "he seems to be neglecting his duty. No doubt his own interests are more stimulating."

Mary felt her heart beating faster as she knew one of her rare moments of temper. But calmly enough, she observed, "All seems to be quite well here. Giles is a man of honor, John. You have no sound cause to doubt him."

Lewger made no comment, and so Mary added, "We have always been such good friends, the Lewgers and the Brents, until — until —"

"Sorry, Mary, quite sorry," Lewger cut in, sparing her now, "but contrary to your remark, all is not quite well here now and I am daily conscious that Giles is long overdue."

"Oh, I pray God they are safe," said Mary, more to herself than to the man beside her. Then of John Lewger she asked, "What is wrong in Maryland, John? What could be wrong on such a heavenly June morning?"

"Much is amiss," Lewger quickly replied. "I am informed the chiefs have been called to assemble at Patuxent, and . . ."

"Oh, me," wailed Mary. "There has been trouble there since the Tayac died. . . ."

"Which is now two years ago," snapped Lewger, "and your brother has been responsible. . . ."

"John! I will not have you continually finding fault with Giles."

"He has tried to secure Mary Kittamaquaand's inheritance — "

"You are mistaken. Margaret is her guardian, not Giles. Margaret and Leonard together took steps to protect the child's lawful inheritance, but since Leonard has been away nothing more has been done."

"Then perhaps, after all, Giles has given up his notion to marry the little Princess?"

"If so, we are not aware of it," Mary replied stiffly. "We all love little Mary very much."

Lewger looked at her in slight disgust. "Well," he said, reverting to provincial affairs, "it is said the gathering at Patuxent is to conclude a peace, including the Susquehannocks. But it may very likely be a war parley. Since the death of the Tayac, the Piscataways have been less and less cordial to us. Captain Fleetes has warned me, also advising Durand and Bennett at Providence. Clayborne, too, may have a hand in this. These would relish a massacre at St. Maries."

"Oh, God have mercy, not that," cried Mary, terror in her voice. "If only Giles would come home!"

"I must take some action," complained Lewger, "though I have been putting it off trusting Giles would re-assume his own responsibility. If only he had appointed another to act in his absence."

"That right is yours," asserted Mary. "You are familiar with the Charter provisions for such a circumstance."

"Those provisions cover an emergency," retorted Lewger, "why should your brother create one?"

All through the late court trouble between Lewger and her brother, Mary had striven to keep a friendly peace between the two families. It had been difficult, and now she found herself almost hating the Secretary; but she also reflected, having so recently received Holy Communion, she should be more charitable towards him.

"Leonard selected Giles to govern this Province," she heard Lewger say now, "yet I shall be forced to take a definite stand.

And there is yet more amiss. You know, of course, of the arrival of the *Thomas and John* from Plymouth?"

"Indeed," acknowledged Mary. "It was by that ship that the news came from Leonard and Anne. They have a son! William Calvert."

"Ah!" beamed Lewger, now smiling for the first time. "Splendid! And congratulations, Aunt Mary!" He made a low and courtly bow in his saddle.

Mary smiled, too, and laughed lightly. This made her feel much better.

But immediately Lewger was all seriousness again. "The *Thomas and John*," he informed her, "also brought a Captain William Mitchell and some forty souls of his party."

"Gracious!" exclaimed Mary, appreciating how pleasant this must have been for Cecilius who was ever anxious to encourage more and more settlers to go to Maryland.

"Mitchell brought a most glowing letter from His Lordship," Lewger was telling her, "which carried instruction that the bearer was to be sworn in as a member of the Council here."

"He must be someone very important if Cecilius requested that," observed Mary.

"Um — " grunted Lewger, "perhaps, but I admit to some mystification."

"You mean you doubt Cecilius' choice?"

"I now gravely doubt the authenticity of the letter," replied Lewger.

"You speak in riddles," complained Mary.

"Does it seem possible to you," Lewger continued as though unaware of Mary's comment, "that Cecilius would introduce to the Council here an avowed atheist?"

"Tolerance — " offered Mary.

"Not tolerance of blasphemy, of stupidity, of immorality or evil."

Mary was too astonished to speak.

Lewger resumed. "Even the ill-bred generally have some respect for the weaker sex."

Mary looked at him sharply.

"Yet with my own eyes," Lewger rushed on, "I saw Captain

Mitchell strike one Susan Warren, a member of his party, and she long with child, too."

"Lord have mercy!" exclaimed Mary, then. She was horrified.

"And upon me, too!" put in Lewger. "For, acting upon that letter, which I am now persuaded to believe a forgery, I have already sworn Mitchell into the Council."

"Why don't you remove him at once?" asked Mary.

"I have no proof," said Lewger.

As Mary remained silent, he went on, "I am sure Cecilius would have no traffic with such a character."

"Where does Captain Mitchell come from?" asked Mary then.

"From Chichester, Sussex."

Mary shook her head. "We never knew many Sussex families."

"I never heard of the Mitchells," replied Lewger. "But I have it now, on good authority, that during the voyage here the man's wife died in a very mysterious manner. She was buried at sea!"

Mary's eyes widened! Memories of the *Charity* revived in a flash. She looked at Lewger with awe.

"Murder?" she asked.

"Who can say?" replied the Secretary.

The dew-drenched foliage and grass sparkled in the morning sunshine. All about them rang a joyful chorus of bird song. Their two horses pawed the damp and fragrant earth, and blissfully nibbled the new succulent grass at the edge of the road. But Mary and Lewger were not now in a mood attuned to the gaiety of the carefree summer morning.

"Captain Mitchell now gives me a most distasteful chore," Lewger re-opened their conversation. "He begs, no, in truth he demands I find a suitable shelter for Susan Warren whose — er — confinement is obviously imminent. And — and — well, Mary, the fact is the man's unsavory character has overshadowed his whole party and no one here will come forth to extend temporary hospitality."

"Why should he make demands?" asked Mary, disgusted.

"He is officious and conceited. He barely knows the manner and language of a gentleman. You see why I suspect the letter he carried?"

"A pity your suspicions were not more quickly aroused, say, before the *Thomas and John* returned to England."

"No doubt Giles would have had a keener perception," put in Lewger sarcastically.

Inwardly Mary bristled, but outwardly she kept calm enough.

"Does your good Anne refuse him shelter?" she asked.

"On the contrary," replied Lewger, "as you are well aware my wife has a heart of gold. But you forget our little daughter Cecily, and young John."

"No, I do not forget," answered Mary, "but I see them as no real obstacle to an act of Christian mercy."

Lewger was exasperated.

"Perhaps," he sputtered in confusion, "I have not made it clear that the woman is not Mitchell's wife!"

The sun was growing warmer, almost hot, and the morning was getting old. Mary was anxious to get back to the Freehold and her breakfast. She tossed about in her mind for some excuse to leave, but Lewger interfered.

"You could help," he said, looking directly at her. His eyes were troubled.

"In the name of heaven, how?" asked Mary, her voice colored with apprehension. "I could not possibly accommodate so many at the Freehold — and too, I have little Mary Kittamaquaand."

"An Indian," scoffed Lewger, "she would be at home with immorality."

"John Lewger!"

Mary was so disgusted that she viciously jerked her reins, and the roan responded with a sudden movement which almost unseated her. Woman and horse started at a fast pace down the path to the Freehold.

"Mary, Mary! Woah!" yelled Lewger, "wait, please, please wait!"

But Mary went right on, faster now. Lewger followed her.

"I am sorry," he said when at last he caught up with her. "Forgive me, Mary. I am beside myself with this filthy business. That woman cannot deliver her child beneath the Mulberry tree. She must have shelter."

"Not at the Freehold," said Mary, her eyes straight ahead.

But in her heart ran the story of the woman taken in adultery, the admonition that he who was sinless should cast the first stone, the refrain, "Inasmuch as ye have done it to the least of these My brethren ye have done it unto Me."

"No," John Lewger was saying as twigs and small branches cracked and snapped under the horses' feet. "I did not intend to ask hospitality at the Freehold. But here, Mary, see yonder there stands the White House, long since deserted by Giles and having no tenant. Mary — ?"

Mary drew rein then and stopped on the edge of the clearing. Far across the newly planted acres, silhouetted against the river beyond, stood Giles once proud house, now deserted for Kent Fort Manor.

"Why do you choose my brother's house?" she demanded petulantly. "Why not Cross Manor, for instance, also deserted since Cornwallseys has left the colony. Or — or, for such a friend of Cecilius," she went on, her words rushing and tumbling now as usual under stress, "why not offer St. John's or Trinity or, indeed, Leonard's own house St. Gabriel's? Why fasten upon the house of Giles Brent?"

"Thank you, Mary, you are very good," said Lewger, his face lighting with relief. He kneed his horse then and turning sharply, headed again for Middle Street. Partially turning in his saddle, he called over his shoulder, "I knew I could depend on your good and generous heart!"

Before Mary could utter a sound, Lewger galloped off and the fresh foliage hid him from view.

"Mercy on us," she said aloud to herself, "did I give consent? What did I say? Giles — oh, Giles will be furious."

In a daze she resumed her way to the Freehold. In spite of the hot sunshine which flooded the bridle path as it skirted the meadow, she shuddered and trembled in the saddle.

"I must be out of my mind," she told herself. "Have I really consented to Giles' White House becoming — good heavens! She must be an immoral woman — John all but said the child was Mitchell's — did I consent? Impossible!"

Twelve

CAME the 26th of June and at last the Brents returned to St. Maries. While the reunited sisters spent the whole day together, Margaret reserving not one detail of their long absence in her report to Mary, Giles had a battle royal with his old enemy, John Lewger.

Man of the world, Giles was a realist. He was not surprised that such an unsavory specimen of human nature as Captain William Mitchell had eventually found his way to Maryland. Free will being a gift of God, Giles realized there was no means by which Maryland might be immunized against immorality. But he was dumbfounded to discover that Lewger had sworn Mitchell into the Council; and furious that the Secretary, taking advantage of Mary's known charity, had extended to Mitchell the hospitality of the White House. He had already had a scene with the soft-hearted Mary which left her dissolved in tears.

When he left the Freehold the morning of the 27th to resume his duties at St. Gabriel's, he was in a black mood. He had sent Tidd to summon Lewger to meet him there.

Lewger was waiting at St. Gabriel's when Giles arrived.

"Greetings," he said perfunctorily, and quite at ease. He was standing with his back to one of the river-view windows. Giles, looking into the light, could not see the poorly veiled expression of contempt on the Secretary's face. He barely grunted an acknowledgement of Lewger's salutation, and took a chair at the great table in the middle of the room.

"I see you did not plan to settle in Virginia after all," Lewger said, as he now took a chair opposite Giles.

For reply, Giles demanded, "Who is Captain Mitchell? I hear he brought a letter from Cecilius. Let me see it."

"Mitchell has it," responded Lewger, in a bristling tone.

"The devil he has," said Giles. "Why?"

"Because he took it from the files. He told me so."

"A likely story! You probably destroyed it to cover your stupidity."

"Sir!" Lewger rose to his feet.

"Sit down," said Giles, "and don't 'sir' me at this late date. Why haven't you got the letter back?"

"Captain Mitchell is not a man to be trifled with," offered Lewger, resuming his seat with the air of a martyr.

"Um — the provincial files are not to be trifled with, either," countered Giles, "not even," he added sneeringly, "by a member of the Council. Bah!"

"The gentleman — "

"Gentleman?" roared Giles.

" — brought forty settlers with him," Lewger continued as though he had not been interrupted.

"You mean forty-one, don't you?" sneered Giles, "or is the number even greater? Oh, the devil take it!" he raged, disgusted with himself for the moment.

"Look here," he resumed then, "I've taken a lot from you, John Lewger — accusations of sedition and such like! But that you should impose on the good nature of my sister to secure shelter for this shady character and his — er — indiscretion is too damn much. What has the family of Brent ever done to you — "

"There are some accumulated matters of provincial business," broke in Lewger nervously, in spite of the chill in his voice. "They should have your attention. Several items should have had your personal attention."

Giles glowered at the Secretary. Then impatiently he scraped his chair back on the bare floor, the legs making a shuddering screech on the wide oak planks.

"Go ahead," he said moodily. His eyes were fastened upon his left foot which he poised on his right knee, and wriggled restlessly.

Considering his temper he listened patiently enough and with good attention, too, to Lewger's recital of miscellaneous events which had transpired during his absence; but when Lewger came to the date of June 18th, 1644 when because the "honor and safety of the colony" seemed to warrant it, he had commissioned Captain

Henry Fleet to go to Patuxent to make peace with the Susquehannocks, Giles again flew into a storm of fury. His immediate impulse was to cuff the Secretary, or else to clench his strong fingers about Lewger's throat. The blundering idiot! But instead, in a voice which was ominously steady, he said:

"I hope at least that you exercised a modicum of good judgment in this treasonable and insane matter, and signed Captain Fleet's commission with your own name!"

Anxiously he scanned Lewger's dismayed countenance. As he watched, the Secretary's face slowly turned crimson.

"I see," roared Giles then. "Not even in this instance could you spare the name of Brent! I should have you hung for treason, save I am convinced you are such a dullard you do not know the meaning of the word."

"Many self-controlled persons of less pugnacious temper than yourself considered well of this procedure," defended Lewger.

"Indeed!"

"To remove for all time the threat of attack by our native enemies does not seem to me a matter to elicit such unseemly rage on your part."

"Quite right," agreed Giles, "there's never an excuse for a man in his right mind to become furious with an imbecile."

"I protest!" cried Lewger, rising again.

"R-r-r-rubbish," growled Giles in crescendo. "Your judgment would not do credit to a sucking infant."

"Now hold there!" stormed Lewger in turn. "Mind your crude tongue. I've had enough!"

"*You* have had enough!" Giles leaned back and laughed. "Ah!" he snorted, "I have had enough of your simple, childish, stupid bungling. Of all the insane, infantile acts, this commission to Fleet is the crowning fiasco. Don't you know he has been suspect since the beginning? He is the very last man in the colony to be trusted with anything aside from a bucket of clams. Certainly not anything as delicate and vital as a treaty of peace to be drawn in our favor." Giles paused for breath and more ideas. Lewger remained stonily silent. "Did it occur to you," Giles asked then, his words hissing through his teeth and beard, "to consult Father White about this appointment?"

"Father White, as you should know," retorted Lewger heatedly, "does not interfere in civil matters."

"'Interfere'? That is not the point!" retorted Giles hotly. "But of course, it is too much to hope you would exercise such prudence. Always sure, aren't you, that no one else could be right but John Lewger. Why didn't you consult Father White? Come now, the truth."

"Father White is known to distrust him — "

"You admit that!" Giles rose and walked around the table to stand face to face with the Secretary. "You admit that! And thereby prove your own smallness. You would not consult someone you knew would disagree with you! If you had sense you would suspect this whole Indian business as a trap, a cover, a — Oh, what a fool, what a fool!"

"We enjoyed the loyal friendship of the Piscataways," Lewger flashed back, "until one Giles Brent tried to acquire title to their lands! You have meddled so in the tribal affairs of our former friends that only Captain Fleete can now cover your blunders. Why should these natives now seek peace with their traditional enemies except to acquire enough strength to avenge themselves upon this colony? It is your greed, Giles Brent, and yours alone which has brought things to this pass."

"My greed!" roared Giles. "Egad, man! Watch your words. Greed! You fool!"

"Watch your own words," retorted Lewger heatedly.

"Mary Kittamaquaand was the rightful heir to those lands. She was only eight when her father, the Tayac, died. So . . ."

"So," Lewger picked him up as Giles had to pause for breath, "you tried to get her inheritance — the property of a miserable native child and in doing so you risked the enmity of our only native friends. You are a grasping adventurer!"

"The devil take you!" roared Giles, advancing menacingly towards the Secretary.

Lewger quickly stepped behind his chair and kept firm hold upon it as a weapon.

"How ridiculous you are!" he scoffed sneeringly, all his abhorrence for Giles coloring his voice.

"Never mind that," snapped Giles between his clenched teeth,

"you had better pray the Lord gives me the grace to keep my hands to myself."

Giles' face was almost purple, his hands doubled into fists. But he kept them at his side, and glared at his antagonist.

Lewger, because Giles did not become physically violent, apparently felt he was master of the situation.

"Had you been where you belonged," he said slowly, "here at your post of duty . . ."

"Do not mention duty to me!" threatened Giles.

". . . then you could have handled this matter as you saw fit," Lewger concluded, keeping a wary eye on Giles' feet. "Probably you would have gone to the Piscataways yourself, thinking you were the only man in the Province able to . . ."

"I warn you, John Lewger," Giles cried his voice rising with each word, as he advanced on the Secretary. Lewger quickly stepped out of his path, dragging the protective chair with him.

"Fleete is now gone eight days," he cried, his voice topping Giles'. "What can you do about it?"

"Plenty," said Giles.

"He raised an army of twenty men," Lewger protested.

"Thomas Gerard can raise an army twice that size and bring him back."

"Huh!" muttered Lewger.

Giles then went back to the table. Reaching for paper and quill he proceeded noisily to scratch out an order. Lewger presumed he was writing out a commission for Sir Thomas. He was surprised then, when in a few moments, Giles handed the document to him.

"I've indulged no false charges here," said Giles temperately.

"What is this?" demanded Lewger. His heavy black hair seemed to rise on his scalp as he examined the sheet still glistening with ink and crusted with particles of sand.

"Read it!" commanded Giles. "You asked me what I could do! You have the answer."

Giles went over to a river window then and stood with his back to the room. He had no desire to witness the Secretary's humiliation. In this moment, Lewger was entitled to privacy.

There was a long, almost deathly silence.

Then Giles heard Lewger roll up the document, walk slowly over to the door and leave the room.

'Umph!' Giles thought, 'he hasn't a word to say, the weakling.'

At the Freehold late that afternoon, relating the scene to Mary and Margaret, the latter very naturally asked him what he had written on the document.

"I removed him from office," Giles replied quietly enough.

"Oh," cried Mary in protest, "not that, Giles. Oh, what will people say!"

"On what grounds?" demanded Margaret.

"As I recall," replied Giles slowly, enjoying the sensation he was creating, "I spared him the charge of treason, which you will admit was generous, considering the provocation."

"Never mind what you spared him," stressed Margaret, "what did you charge him with?"

"I charged him of acting without order or authority from me, and of counterfeiting His Lordship's great seal and the Lieutenant General's hand to the Fleet commission; such acts being of high misdemeanor and offense, requiring severe animadversion! Therefore," Giles concluded with his customary flourish and gusto, "the said John Lewger is hereby suspended from the office and dignity of Councillor and Secretary to this province, and all other Commissions granted to him by me are revoked. To which I admit, that with great satisfaction, I inscribed the name of Giles Brent!"

Mary and Margaret remained silent with astonishment.

"And now," Giles informed them, "I have in mind the one alternative which is likely to cement peace between ourselves and the Piscataways."

"Thomas Gerard?" asked Margaret.

"Pooh!" retorted Giles. "Ridiculous. The time has come for me to marry Mary Kittamaquaand."

Margaret looked at him in amazement. "How you arrive at that conclusion," she said, "is a profound mystery."

"Well now, just hold on," said Giles calmly, "take a realistic view, and consider, too, that I love the child."

"Giles!" protested Mary.

"I have my doubts," said Margaret.

"But I do," he replied simply. "And you, my sisters, deserve great credit. Little Mary is more English than native. In imitating you both she has acquired great charm —"

"Giles," interrupted Margaret, "you need not flatter us."

"I do not," he snapped, a trifle impatiently. "I admit, Margaret, you can try the patience of a saint, let alone a sinner like myself, but your charm, when you are not annoying a fellow, is a natural attribute which you cannot stifle."

"Go on, Giles," urged Mary, as Margaret sighed resignedly.

"Delighted!" said Giles, making a little bow. "Now, this is what I have in mind. Suppose Maryland is sequestered by Parliament? Is it not possible that through a marital alliance with the original owners of this land that we, the Brents, might lay just claim to the colony and so preserve it for . . ."

"The Brents," finished Margaret, tersely.

"Fantastic," said Mary, shaking her head.

"And a long chance," added Margaret, "although I will admit in these strange days anything might be possible."

"I believe it a chance worth the taking," said Giles with determination.

Long since the sisters had reviewed their initial attitude towards this marriage. One of their objections had been the racial difference, and next the great disparity of age, Giles being the child's senior by some thirty-odd years. But he had met each objection with a counter-claim which the sisters could not easily refute. He pointed out that at the request of Chitomachon, Margaret and Leonard had had no scruples in legally adopting Mary Kittamaquaand and giving her the name of Brent. The disparity in age, he held, was a minor objection; Anne Arundell had been not quite fourteen when Cecilius Calvert married her; such age differences were not uncommon.

Young Mary possessed charm, poise, grace; her speech was fluent and cultured, her education covering the four R's, plus the domestic arts, was adequate. Giles challenged his sisters to advance one irrefutable objection to the marriage. Facing this challenge Margaret and Mary had had to remain speechless.

As they now discussed the matter Mary Kittamaquaand, herself,

came through the open door, next the chimney, which led from the garden into the living room.

"Oh, good-day, sir," she said smiling at Giles. Her arms were full of June blooms from Mary's garden. She hesitated on the threshold. "May I come in? I did not know Uncle Giles was here."

"Indeed, yes," replied Giles, rising to greet her. "You are a picture, my dear. Van Dyck, himself, could not do you justice."

Mary Kittamaquaand laughed at him.

She was tall for her age, matured and willowy. Her gown of pale blue lawn accented her richly toned skin and black hair, which because of the warm afternoon, was piled high on her head.

"We have been talking about you," Giles informed her as she dropped her flowers on the center table where she had previously set out containers of water in which to arrange them.

"You had best make speed, dear," said Mary, "Miranda will soon lay the table for supper."

"I will hurry," she said. Then turning to Giles, she asked, "What have you been saying about me?"

"Very important things," he told her.

She paused in her arrangement of the flowers, and looked at him curiously. Giles did not notice the troubled expression in her eyes.

"Since I was a little girl," she told him, "you have always teased me." And she managed a sample of a laugh.

"But not today," replied Giles.

The serious note in his voice made Mary Kittamaquaand stop altogether with the flowers. Slowly she walked to Giles' chair.

With a note of alarm, she asked, "Have my people given trouble?" Her dark eyes plainly anticipated an affirmative reply which she knew would mean tragedy and sorrow for them all.

"Bless me, no," laughed Giles reassuringly. Reaching for her hand, and holding it in both of his, he added, "I want to marry you, little Mary. I want you to be my wife."

Quickly the child pulled her hand away. She darted a glance at her aunts only to see them smiling at her. Then she looked at Giles.

"Oh, no!" she protested. "Oh, no! No!"

The three Brents were amazed. They had never presumed the child would display a mind of her own. When the moment came, they had always fancied she would docilely submit.

"No?" Giles smiled at her.

Mary Kittamaquaand shook her head. Tears welled in her dark eyes. Mary Brent rose and stood beside her, putting an arm about her young shoulders. Margaret said nothing. What now?

"There," said Mary, caressing the little girl, "our brother has surprised you. Do not be afraid, dear."

"It cannot be, it cannot be," cried the child, "I am not good."

She leaned against Mary, her eyes on Giles. Tears rolled down her cheeks. "Always I have loved you," she said. She dropped her head on Mary's shoulder and wept.

The Brents looked at each other completely mystified.

Then gently Giles took her hand, but she resisted. She walked away from them, to the fireless hearth, and turning about, faced them.

"I must tell you," she began, valiantly stifling her tears, "Mary Kittamaquaand is not good enough to marry a white man. No. Nor even one of her own people," she paused, her lower lip trembling.

"Whatever do you mean, child?" begged Margaret. "We have always loved you, we . . ."

"But you have never known the truth!"

Giles looked at her steadily.

"My father, the Tayac, was . . ."

"Yes?" Giles prompted her gently.

"A very bad man," said Mary Kittamaquaand looking directly at Giles. "He was Emperor because he killed my uncle Uwanno."

"Uwanno?" Giles interrupted. "Was he your father's brother?"

Mary Kittamaquaand nodded her head.

"Why . . ." breathed Mary Brent.

"He is the one with whom Leonard conferred when he first came here. Leonard always thought he died naturally," enlarged Margaret.

"Go on, little Mary," Giles suggested.

"My father wanted to be Emperor. That is why he killed my

uncle. Uwanno was taking too long to die. My father had no son — only me. He thought Uwanno kept him from having sons, so he . . .”

“But how could your father be Emperor?” asked Giles, “did your uncle have no sons?”

Mary Kittamaquaand looked puzzled.

“Yes,” she said, slowly, “his son is Uttaapoingassinen — the brave who wanted to marry me.”

“Umh!” grunted Giles, “why was he not Emperor when his father died. By the law of primogeniture . . .”

“Oh, please,” begged the child, looking questioningly at Margaret.

“He means that the son would inherit his father’s title as in England,” she explained.

“Oh, no, not with my people,” said Mary Kittamaquaand. “With the Piscataways it goes from brother to brother and when there are no more brothers, to cousins or uncles.”

This was information, indeed, to the Brents.

Giles leaned forward in his chair, his elbows on his knees, his gaze intent upon the Indian child. “But how is it,” he asked her softly, “that you are Princess of the Piscataways, one day to rule your people?”

“But my father has no more brothers,” explained the young girl, “and he made this arrangement especially for his oldest child. It is contrary to our customs.”

Giles smiled, then. Changing his tone, he asked, “How is it that Weghucasso is now Tayac?”

“Poor old Weghucasso. He is so old,” said Mary Kittamaquaand pityingly. “He is uncle to Uwanno and to my father.”

“And when he dies?” asked Giles, his voice carrying an inference which was not lost upon his sisters.

Mary Kittamaquaand looked at him blankly and shrugged her shoulders. She was dry-eyed now, and having at last relieved her conscience by revealing the unhappy truth about her father’s ill-gotten title, she waited. She was afraid. Now these good English guardians would no longer want her — the daughter of a murderer. Her own people had disowned her — if she returned to them she would be killed. Where would she go when her English

friends banished her? With the stoicism of her race, she stood before them, stiff and straight, ready to receive with courage whatever adverse blow might fall.

For a moment there was profound silence.

The sisters' minds whirled with the realization that this would be a test of Giles' sincerity. Did he really love the child?

They had not long to know.

He rose and slowly walked over to the hearth where Mary Kit-tamaquaand, muscles tense, stood motionless. Her eyes sought his and held them.

Giles stooped and kissed her.

Then she relaxed, her shoulders drooped and her eyelids fell.

"It makes no difference to me, little one," Giles said, paternally embracing her. "I want you for my wife."

As quietly as possible Margaret and Mary withdrew. Miranda must not come in at this moment to lay the supper table.

When they were out of earshot, Mary said, "I believe he is sincere."

"The Tayac, Weghucasso, is an old man," replied Margaret cryptically.

Thirteen

IT was now the end of August, 1644, but still too soon for the Marylanders to know that the whole north of England had been lost to King Charles by Cromwell's victory at Marston Moor on the second of July; or that the Lord Baltimore, then at Bristol, now urged Leonard's immediate return because of the sharp anxiety he experienced for the fate of his Province. This anxiety was aggravated too, by Cecilius' growing realization that in all probability he, himself, would never see Maryland. For over eighteen months he had been under bond not to leave the realm, the King's obviously was a lost cause, and countries do not recover swiftly from civil war. Possibly another generation, or even two, would arise before, under a victorious Cromwell, restrictions upon one's movements might be removed. Then Cecilius would be past middle life; and worse, perhaps by then he would have long since lost Maryland. Leonard had never known his brother to be peevish and fractious until now. But Leonard understood, sympathized, and made allowances.

However, for purely personal reasons, he was loath to return to America now. In spite of his faithful administration of colonial affairs which had become a preoccupation, it had never been his desire to approach his late thirties minus wife and family. He had known a forlorn loneliness in Maryland. He had assumed the Lieutenant Generalship merely as a loyal accommodation to his brother. But now the appointment seemed permanent.

Leonard was not politically ambitious. All he wished was to live the life of a comfortable English squire, free to practice his religion and surrounded by his wife and children. Anne was again with child and could not travel until the Nativity at least. He

reminded Cecilius of this fact and was offended to receive short sympathy. To return now, alone, leaving Anne, his son William and the child yet unborn was a bitter blow. Leonard suggested delay, pending Parliament's known policy towards the property of royalists, but Cecilius was adamant, and Leonard could not deny the wisdom of his desire. So it was that within four weeks of Marston Moor, Leonard was again at sea, returning to Maryland — alone.

Immediately after his mid-September arrival, he re-instated John Lewger as Secretary, Giles, Sir Thomas Gerard, Thomas Greene and James Neale as Council.

Giles was irked by the restoration of Lewger, and was frankly astonished that James Neale had been re-appointed. Had Cecilius forgotten that it was Neale, who with Cornwaleys, had let Ingle escape from the colony? Giles grew more and more disgusted with His Lordship's management of colonial affairs and spoke as much to Leonard who heatedly defended his brother by reminding Giles that he had once been tried for sedition and could be so tried again.

When Leonard left Maryland on a fruitless trip to Virginia to consult with Sir William Berkeley, unaware that this gentleman had unexpectedly gone to England the June previous, after his Maryland guests had departed from Middle Plantation, he deliberately passed over Giles and designated Vincent Waynehouse as acting governor. All the Brents resented this obvious snub. It mattered not that Waynehouse had forsaken his questionable domestic venture on Kent and now resided at St. Maries, the lawful husband of Mary McShane, a former servant of Sir Edmond Plowden, who had first come to America with a patent for Long Island.

In retaliation for the apparent affront, Giles chose the time of Leonard's absence in Virginia to marry Mary Kittamaqua and quietly at the Freehold.

Thus it happened that when Leonard returned he found that Giles and his bride, together with Margaret, were absent at Kent Fort Manor. They did not return to St. Maries until shortly before the Nativity.

Giles had wished then to occupy the White House, but Margaret pointed out it was no longer a "respectable" abode for his wife.

Captain Mitchell had been ejected, following his conviction for adultery, but the Brent sisters felt his tenancy had left the White House defiled.

Mitchell had been sentenced to pay a fine of five thousand pounds of tobacco, had been removed from the Council, naturally, and had been required to give bond for his future good behavior. The woman in the case drew a more severe punishment. She was sentenced to be publicly whipped because of the "great scandal to the government by her lewd course of life." "Thirty-nine lashes upon her bare back" were mitigated slightly by the intercession of the Governor and Council; Giles alone, holding out for full execution of the sentence.

The humiliation brought upon his house by these English immigrants had burned his pride and hardened his heart. Now, in the City for the Christmas season, Giles occupied his house alone, while his wife resumed her former niche at the Freehold.

A new humiliation greeted him. It soon became evident that his friends and neighbors disapproved of his marriage. This disapproval was not extended to his sisters; they were expected to stand by him because of blood ties. But society, itself, had no such obligation.

It was hard for Giles to realize he had overshot his personal prestige and popularity. As treasurer of the colony, a military leader, a member of the Council and former acting governor, a prosperous planter and shrewd exporter, he had presumed his position was inviolable. But public opinion recalled his feud with John Lewger, his handling of the Ingle affair, his military failure at Kent, his long absence in Virginia while acting governor, his trial for sedition together with his boastfulness, his pride, his grasping nature and his ever ready temper. Society had had enough of Giles Brent. He had exhausted its patience by the blunder of an inter-racial marriage. Now to his dismay, he discovered that wealth, acumen and political prestige could be over-rated.

So it was that during the Nativity season his affections for Maryland began to cool and were transferred to his acres across the Potomac in Virginia. Why not remove to Westmoreland County and there create a new home for his bride and children yet unborn? Domesticity became alluring. Why not forget all these trouble-

some affairs of state and Province, and retire — exactly! He would call the new home "Retirement."

But his wounded pride could not permit a graceful exit. He sought to deal humiliation for humiliation. On the sixth of January, 1645, he brought suit against Leonard in the Provincial Court to recover some several head of cattle which, as her legal guardian, Leonard should have delivered to Mary Kittamaqua and the April previous. The court pointed out that since Giles, himself, was then acting governor, he should have seen to this matter, and therefore it refused his claim for 5700 pounds of tobacco in damages.

Smacking although not beaten by this rebuff, the next day Giles again appeared, demanding damages from Leonard for lands at Kent which he claimed Leonard had promised him but which he had deliberately permitted Clayborne to confiscate. He accused Leonard of indifference because he failed to provide adequate protection at Kent. But the Court would not allow this claim, either.

That evening he spent at the Freehold, discussing his plans for "Retirement." He would leave for Virginia in the morning. But it was a most uncomfortable evening. Margaret minced no words in telling him he had made a fool of himself to seek public vengeance for imagined affronts. His two exhibitions of umbrage had been too much for Margaret and Mary. Their loyalties were torn between brother and brother-in-law.

Very soon after supper Giles left. His sisters and his wife watched him down the oyster-shell path to the drive and then off towards the stable for his horse.

Early one morning in mid-February Margaret braved a stiff east wind and penetrating cold to go to St. Gabriel's. Leonard had sent for her. He asked that she come at once, and alone. All the length of Middle Street Margaret urged the roan to her maximum speed. Her hands, in spite of the wool mittens Mary had made for her last Christmas, grew so cold she could barely clutch the reins. Her own breath and that of the horse frosted in the unusually bitter temperature, the wind blowing the stinging vapor against her cheeks. What urgency, she asked herself, impelled Leonard to send such a message on this cruel, cold morning?

Reaching the Manor, she did not dally with formalities, but

admitted herself unannounced, and entering the main hall the strange sight that greeted her made her pause.

Leonard sat on the floor before a roaring log fire. His setter, Duke, half sat, half lay beside his master, now and then raising his silken head to lick Leonard's cheek. Meanwhile, as though barely conscious of his occupation, Leonard was absently picking burrs from the long, snarled fur about the dog's paw. He had not heard Margaret open the oak door, nor felt the gust of cold wind which followed her into the room. She, in turn, with a feeling of revulsion wondered how Leonard could tolerate the dog's sloppy tongue on his face and beard. And then she noted his face was streaked with tears. Never before had Margaret seen a man weep. The sight stunned her. She wanted to escape unnoticed; to save him the embarrassment of discovery — but he expected her. Now, Duke sensed her presence and she could not escape if she would; for pulling his paw from Leonard's hands, he came clumping to greet her.

Absently she reached down to pat his head, her eyes fastened on his master. Leonard tried to smile a welcome, but only managed a sad grimace as he clumsily stood up. Instantly she was at his side, her hands on his shoulders, her eyes searching his.

"What is it? What is it, Leonard?" she demanded. She wondered why she whispered.

He held her off at arm's length, his hands tense. Looking at her intently, while trying to control his voice, he said dully,

"Anne. Anne is dead."

For a sickening instant, Margaret reeled, but Leonard held her steady. Then her whole body became rigid. Burning tears fought for escape from her blazing eyes, but she would not let them scorch down her chapped windbitten cheeks. Duke, reconciled to being ignored for the present, turned several circles at their feet, and with a thud, flopped down on the hearth beside them.

"The word came last night," Margaret heard Leonard say, and realized dimly that he was leading her to the bench beside the fire. They sat down together, and he brought a soiled and rumpled letter from his waistcoat.

"A messenger from the Governor of Virginia brought it," he explained, studying the paper in his hand as though it were a

museum piece. "It is from Fulke," he went on, now passing the letter to Margaret. "He sent it by the first ship, I suppose. Governor Kemp informed me one had put in at James City with a cargo from England and the Indies."

Margaret took the letter, opened it eagerly — thankful for something to do, though she dreaded to read the message.

*Feast of St. Nicholas
Larke Stoke in Gloucestershire.*

To my good brother-in-law, Leonard Calvert, Lieutenant General of Marieland, at St. Maries City.

Sir:

You have an infant daughter born and baptized this day. Her name is Anne, to honor her noble mother, your devoted and loving wife and our dearly beloved sister, who, after a painful and over-long confinement, gave her own life in exchange for that of this wee infant.

Only with great persuasion and most grovelling appeals could our sister Elizabeth procure even a mid-wife to attend our lamented Anne. In our present immediacy here it is dangerous for a physician to assist at the birth of a papist infant. Such an act now carries the stigma and implication of treason and may be followed by the usual penalty.

Be assured, good brother, our dear Anne will be laid away with loving hands this night in St. Mary's Churchyard at Illmington next our dear parents of blessed memory, or, this being not possible, then next her late sister Catherine who lies at Pebworth.

You will have Anne's requiem sung in Marieland for this devotion we cannot here contemplate at this time.

And also, good brother, your son William, and infant daughter Anne will have our every affectionate care and attention until you can remove them to the shelter and protection of your own roof-tree.

The Brents remain non-juring subjects of this realm. Adming-

ton, therefore, is irretrievably lost to us, but Larke Stoke we are yet spared.

*Grieving much, sir, to send you this dire intelligence, I remain
Your humble, sorrowful and ever obedient servant,
Fulke Brent*

Absently Margaret refolded the tragic letter; even in her sorrow she knew astonishment that Fulke, a Brent, had written at such length. But she was not aware that Leonard took the letter from her listless hands. Without a word, she got up and slowly walked to a river window. Automatically she fumbled in her reticule for a handkerchief. Blindly she gazed out the window. Leonard never took his eyes from her.

So he knew when Margaret began to cry. Instantly he was beside her, holding her close in his arms, his lips pressed against her soft hair. She buried her head deep in his waistcoat and cried out her heart. Leonard said nothing. He just held her tight, relieved to find her present need of him was a check on his own grief.

"I can never, never tell Mary," Margaret sobbed hysterically. "Oh, Leonard, it is cruel, unjust, unfair — we have been waiting so anxiously for Anne to come, and —"

Leonard swallowed hard. "Yes," he said gently, "we have waited, Margaret. I seem to be always waiting — waiting for happiness and growing older with each day."

"Oh, dear God!" wailed Margaret, "why did You take Anne from us? Have we not enough trial and trouble? Couldn't You have spared one ray of happiness. . . ."

"Hush!" scolded Leonard, "mysterious are the ways of God. His reasons"

"Are cruel," broke in Margaret defiantly.

Raising her eyes to his she seemed to beseech Leonard for reassurance, for a word, a sentence to tell her this was a horrible dream and nothing more.

"There," he said, pressing her to him again, "there, Margaret, you must submit and so must I. Our Anne is removed from a troubulous England — unhappy land."

This seemed to comfort Margaret. They stood silently for a

time, and then Margaret felt Leonard stiffen. Looking up she saw his red rimmed eyes straining out the window.

In a voice from which all personal grief was absent, he sternly ordered, "Bring me my glass!"

Margaret obeyed, still in a daze, but realizing it was a blessing to be ordered to do something.

It seemed a year that Leonard stood at the window, the glass to his eye, intently peering out upon the river. All her naked eye could discern through the light haze were some mysterious forms, but she could not tell what they were.

"Follow me," Leonard said at last, dashing from the room, out upon the terrace and down to the river's edge. Duke ran after them.

Then again for a long time he spied upon several ships which now Margaret, too, could see clearly, out beyond the mouth of St. George's River in the broad Potomac.

"Gracious," she said, "it looks like the Spanish Armada."

Leonard lowered the glass and looked at her with dry eyes, but their message was more trouble.

"It is an 'Armada,'" he said, "the leading ship is the *Reformation*, of which Captain Richard Ingle was, and probably still is, master."

"Ingle!" Margaret was horrified. "A Parliament ship! Oh, God, have mercy!" She snatched the glass from Leonard and now saw there was no mistaking the formidable fleet.

"This is the end," she said, handing the glass back to Leonard, and automatically buttoning her coat about her. "God was good to Anne."

Leonard looked at her sharply.

"Not the end without a fight," he scolded her. "We will see Master Ingle's papers first."

"It is the end," Margaret repeated in a tone of utter resignation. "We may as well give up."

Leonard grabbed her shoulder and shook her roughly. "Come," he demanded, "I expect courage from a Brent, and a fight before surrender. I need Giles, now, and Cornwaleys. Neither are here. The colony must be prepared to welcome this uninvited visitor," he went on, as though thinking aloud as he spoke. "You

spread the alarm, Margaret, on your side of Mattapany Street, and up Middle Street on your way back to the Freehold. Stay there and hold fast. I may need you — you must be where I can find you. I'll send all the help I can if this really means trouble, as I am afraid it does. Go on, now — spread the alarm. I'll give the signal here — you see that it is repeated."

As Margaret galloped up Middle Street the fearsome signal rang in her ears; a quick succession of musket shots, three in a row — pause, three in a row again — to be repeated every quarter hour. Throughout the colony this was the alarm for imminent danger. At its sound all were to go to the Fort and the militia was to stand by for orders. The militia! Thirty armed men, some of whom had to assemble from half as many miles away.

Few of the inhabitants heeded the warning. Usually there was ample time to seek protection. Often the alarm had been false, set off by misinformation. This day was too cold to expose oneself to the weather too hurriedly. So everyone stayed in their houses, hugging their warm and comfortable hearths. Only the disciplined Militia responded as the ominous fleet drew nearer and nearer to St. Maries City.

Forty-eight hours later, St. Maries was a shambles.

After the long weeks aboard ship, Ingle's brigands had streamed ashore, yelling and whooping, and, armed with muskets, lustng for loot and ruin. The City had been over-run, the torch applied indiscriminately; plundering was rampant.

As soon as Margaret had delivered the awful news at the Freehold, Mary Kittamaqua and Brent, ignoring the pleas and then the protests of her "aunts," now her sisters-in-law, had gone to Patuxent. She knew it was dangerous to return to her own people who no longer esteemed her. But in spite of their increasing hostility towards the English, Mary's two friends, Father White and Father Fisher, were, she knew, at Kittamaqua andi. Mary went to warn them of Ingle's invasion.

Father Hartwell, now superior of the Maryland mission, had spied the approach of the forbidding fleet long before Leonard. From his house at St. Inigoes he had sent a messenger to warn the Governor, aware that the return of the *Reformation* must be an ill

omen. Later, with the Fathers Rigbie and Cooper, he crossed to Virginia.

Too late, many heeded the alarm which Leonard had spread.

Not only had Ingle easily captured the Fort at St. Inigoes, but by nightfall of the second day, John Lewger had been taken into custody by the invaders, as well as James Neale and Thomas Greene of the Council. Cannily Leonard had escaped capture. He had received a wound in his left shoulder late in the afternoon of the first day of the invasion.

On the third day an attempt was made to capture Sir Thomas Gerard at St. Clements. Ingle would not rest until all the officials of the government were imprisoned. But Sir Thomas had had time to escape to Virginia. Too lazy to make a diligent search for him, the brigands remained long enough to fire the Manor House and all the out-buildings.

Giles, whom Margaret and Mary supposed for the past month safe in Virginia at "Retirement," then in its initial stages of construction, was in fact at Poplar's Island. He had not gone there so much to oblige Leonard who had sent for him, as to protect his own interests. For, as though with a pre-knowledge of what was about to happen, Clayborne had again bodily acquired full possession of Kent. Giles was at Poplar's Island to gather forces and materials necessary to dislodge him. Perhaps never in all her brief history, had Maryland so needed the services of competent military leaders such as Giles and the now absent Captain Cornwallseys.

Leonard had offered the maximum resistance of which he was capable. When Ingle made his initial landing, Leonard had met him with his total force of thirty men. But Ingle had come ashore with an army of two hundred, brought from England on five ships.

A swift, bloody exchange of fire occurred. Leonard's men were mowed down. He retreated with but five survivors and sought what natural refuge the contours of the land afforded. From such hidden places the Marylanders sniped and harassed the men of the superior invading force. But they had little effect. Ingle's men swarmed up the banks of the river and spread over the City. At best, the Maryland resistance was only a trifling nuisance to them.

Before dawn of the third day, the five survivors of Leonard's force had arranged his escape to Virginia so that he might solicit aid from the acting Governor Kemp. But alas, Kemp felt it inexpedient to be effectively sympathetic. To align Virginia on the side of "popery" was a responsibility he chose not to assume. He told Leonard he would have to wait for the return of Sir William Berkeley from England. He was expected in four or five months.

Meanwhile the Fathers at Patuxent returned to the city, planning to join their Company there. Their trip was broken at day-break when they found shelter at the home of William Stone, sincere Protestant, good neighbor, and always a loyal supporter of the Lord Baltimore. When the Fathers resumed their journey that evening, travelling on foot, Stone insisted upon escorting them to the house of their superior at St. Inigoes.

By this time, Ingle was fully established at the Fort. His sentry, therefore, surprised the party, and with a triumphant cry: "By God! Two papist priests!" he left his post to take all three before Captain Ingle. Nearby was a guard escorting a half dozen prisoners to confinement. Hearing the cry of the sentry he left his charges momentarily to witness the captive priests. Of course his prisoners, taking advantage of the black night, scattered and easily escaped. Later, informed of this mishap, Ingle had the guard severely beaten then placed in chains aboard one of the vessels in the river. Among those whom the guard had inadvertently allowed to get away were the two Councillors, James Neale and Thomas Greene.

William Stone was unknown to Ingle, but Durand of Providence, who strangely happened to be in the City at the time of the invasion — as though he, too, had had some advance notice of Ingle's coming — quickly identified Stone as a non-papist. So Stone was released. He returned to his home with mixed emotions, for as he had left he had seen a burly guard cuff the ageing Father White over the head. Another spit in the face of Father Fisher. All the way home, and on into a sleepless night, Stone heard Ingle's raucous laugh of hate echo in his ears.

For seven days thereafter, homes were fired and Catholic blood flowed profusely at St. Maries. After this, spasmodic looting became a feature of Ingle's occupation.

At the end of the first ten days, thinking perhaps, that he had made a sufficient impression upon the Marylanders, Ingle sent his brigands abroad to round up all survivors, young and old. They were herded about the mulberry tree which had been the scene of Ingle's assault upon Henry Bishop two years ago when Giles' proclamation against him had been nailed to this ancient "town crier."

With impressive braggadocio Ingle rode out to address them. Several noted he was mounted on one of Leonard's most handsome stallions. Facing the subjugated colonists, Ingle assured them:

"I have come with peace and love," he smiled, "as a representative of Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Proprietor and Chief Keeper of the Liberties of England."

Parliament had commissioned him, he went on to explain. "I am here to wipe out the Jesuit mission, to uproot popery for all time. Then I will give Maryland over to the rule of the God-fearing Independents. Let no sniveling, evil, devilish papists offer resistance to this noble crusade of liberation!"

Meanwhile, as he talked, his men accumulated a formidable pile of papers, bound volumes, and documents on the ground before him. These were the official records of Colonial Maryland, the written account of the proceedings of Council and Assembly, probated wills, land grants, and a copy of the Royal Charter.

With burning resentment, the gathered colonists watched. Some of these wore bandages over recently acquired wounds or burns. Some were homeless now, and hungry, too. Only a fortnight previously some of them had enjoyed the companionship of kin-folk who by now had been murdered. Then they had been sound in health, for the most part: none of them bore brutal wounds then; all of them had then enjoyed the comfortable security of their own homes. Now, as this plundered and subjected remnant of the colonists silently looked on, Ingle ordered the torch to the Maryland documents. All were consumed.

The great seal of the Province was temporarily spared. Ingle explained he would first salvage the silver from it and then toss it into the Atlantic on his return to England, when he would leave Maryland at peace with Parliament and the Lord Protector.

England!

Many a Maryland heart and mind looked back to England then. The memory of England's worst eras of persecution now seemed devoid of much that had once been unbearable. Ingle's persecution had a sinister, diabolic touch. The rape of St. Maries was complete.

Fourteen

FOUR or five nights after this forced assemblage, as Margaret and Mary sat in their living room at the Freehold, Tidd came to warn them of the approach of the enemy. The girls had expected such a visitation, for there was no reason why the Freehold would escape, and so they had not had their clothes off for a week. Added to their anxiety through these past days, was the continued absence of Mary Kittamaquaand. She had not been seen since she left to warn the Jesuits.

"We must go to Giles for protection," cried Mary, as the cries of the on-coming mob grew louder.

"Too late now to start out for Virginia," objected Margaret.

She was wandering about the room, methodically salvaging small articles which were wholly unimportant.

"If you will, mam," Tidd implored, "step over to the woods at the edge of our clearing. We may hide there until the ruffians have passed by."

"Passed by!" snapped Margaret, "you must be in your dotage, man, they will not pass by."

But Tidd's suggestion was quickly adopted. About to leave the house, Margaret rushed back, to retrieve her most choice possession, her six silver spoons. Then she and Mary with Tidd and their five indentures dashed for the covering woods.

The late February night was dark and cold. Across their own fields they saw the band of brigands approach. Their pine torches blazed against the blackness, making them an excellent target. Margaret knew an urge to grab Tidd's gun and fire into the mob. But for the sake of their own safety, if nothing else, she refrained.

On, on came the rowdies, singing at the top of their drunken

voices, the reflection from their torches showing up their ugly, red and bearded faces. A shabby lot, a low common lot for an English army, Parliament or no. Now their coarse jokes were clearly audible and Mary, horrified, stopped her ears. At last they reached the Freehold, and Margaret's heart thumped so she could scarcely breathe. If those hideous men so much as laid a hand on her precious home — but there, they had. Two were peering through the glass windows, others swarmed the courtyard. Margaret counted ten in all.

"Whose home did yuh say this is?" called one voice.

"Belongs to that Brent hussy," answered the apparent leader. "She's got a sister, too."

"Pretty gals?" called another voice.

"The spitfire 'as red 'air," responded a rasping whisky voice.

"'Ow about the sister?"

"They calls 'er a 'angel of mercy.' "

In the darkness Mary groaned.

Peals of ribald laughter greeted this information.

"Let's 'ave a look at the angel," yelled a drunken voice.

"Meybe she kin smoke out them other priests," called another.

"Yeh! The 'apostles of Maryland,' yow! 'ee!"

"To hell with the priests," roared another voice, "we'll slit their guts yet. Let's git to the women."

"Hey, Bob, you there," the leader now called in sharp command, having sized up the situation to his satisfaction, "take Jake with you and search the stables. The Brents are plenty rich. They oughter have a good bag of livestock."

The refugees at the edge of the wood saw two men leave the group then, and start for the stables.

"If they hurt the roan!" cried Mary.

"Go on with 'em, Will," called the leader's voice again. "Fire the damn barn when you git the stock out."

Mary wailed softly and clung frantically to Margaret.

"Hush!" ordered her sister tensely, and whispering in her ear she said hoarsely, "mind the servants, Mary. Control yourself."

"Look yonder," Tidd said now, "down Captain Giles' way."

The entire group strained their eyes. The White House, perched on a small knoll, always had been visible save in a fog or

heavy weather, and now through the many slight, bare branches Margaret and Mary saw two torch lights before Giles' doorway. Distance dwarfed them. Margaret yearned for her spy glass which she had not thought to bring with her.

"Giles must be there. We *must* go to him." Mary was almost hysterical.

"Ridiculous!" admonished Margaret. "We'd never make it alive."

"Mam!" Tidd spoke harshly, "look!"

The Freehold had been set afire.

The sisters stood locked in each other's arms in the sheltering darkness, helpless to stay the destruction of their home. Mary sobbed audibly. Margaret was tense and rigid, burning with a consuming rage.

The blaze was terrifyingly beautiful. Furious as she was, Margaret could not fail to appreciate the magnificent horror of the sight. Constructed of pine, the Freehold was quickly enveloped by the greedy, swirling flames. They spiraled high overhead as though playfully chasing the sparks which preceded them into the black heavens. The dry wood crackled, the sharp tones echoed in the woods about the refugees. Now, like wide ribbons of the finest silk, the flames waved gently to and fro on the slightly stirring night air, lighting and then knifing great billows of black smoke which sluggishly rolled upward as though reluctant to part company with the fragrant pitch which had fathered them.

Mary could not bear to watch, but Margaret never took her eyes from the scene. As the flames grew more prolific, gobbling up her own creation, the whole of the past six years flashed through her memory. Maryland had given them sanctuary, indeed, but not a wholly peaceful one; yet now with Sir Richard, Catherine and Anne all dead, Margaret would not want to return to Larke Stoke. She felt as though never before in her life had she faced such an impasse. What would become of them? Where was Leonard — Giles — Mary Kittamaquaand?

As these questions pressed upon her she saw one of Ingle's men, mounted on the roan, riding up and down at a safe distance beside the burning building. The roan, always a sensitive beast, was obviously frightened. The man on her bare back reeled. He

was enormously fat. An insane notion took hold of Margaret. Motioning all to silence, she snatched Tidd's musket from his hands and stepped out into the clearing.

She had no plan. She only knew a desperate, impelling desire to hurt at least one of those who had destroyed her beloved home.

Softly she whistled.

The roan pricked her ears.

Margaret whistled again. The horse turned and trotted in her direction. But her burden was heavy and her progress slow. Discovering the beast had a mind of her own, her rider, temporarily alert, began to beat her flanks with his bare fists. But with a mighty effort the roan increased her speed in the direction from which Margaret's whistle had come. Instinctively Margaret stepped back.

"Woah! Woah!" roared the roan's rider, digging his pudgy knees into her ribs. "You damn she-devil, woah!"

But Margaret whistled encouragement and the roan plodded on towards her. Still, Margaret had no plan — but she had a musket in her hands.

With a mighty and powerful blow the roan's rider cuffed her over the head. Startled, she galloped an instant, then slowed her face and shaking her rider's hand free of her mane, she reared on her hind feet. Of his own gross weight the man on her back slid off her buttocks and fell with a thud on the hard frozen ground, striking his head on a boulder.

Margaret boldly ran towards the roan. Feeling a familiar hand on her muzzle, the horse nuzzled her cold nose into Margaret's neck and whinnied. Cautiously Margaret approached the still form of Ingle's man. He lay just as he had fallen, his big head flat against his right shoulder, the nape of his neck jammed against the rock. Blood covered his coarse mouth and matted his beard.

Margaret left him there, and carefully leading the roan over the rutted, frozen ground, she returned to the refugees at the edge of the wood.

Towards dawn, long after the mob had left, they too turned their backs on the still smoldering embers of the Freehold and made their way across the uneven fields to Giles' White House.

The house was cold and deserted. There was no evidence of recent occupancy — the larder was bare — but obviously the place had been recently ransacked, for all was in great disorder. Margaret was quick to note the drawer in the chest, which usually housed Giles' important papers, was open and empty. A quick examination by Tidd revealed the barns had also been pilfered; there was no corn, no wheat and no tobacco.

Margaret and Mary were distraught.

They sat now in Giles' small living room trying to collect their wits and form some plan. With its low ceilings and small windows "glazed" with heavy oiled paper, the White House was a marked contrast to the airy dimensions of the Freehold whose design, Giles had always insisted, was the extravagant fruit of impractical fancy. By virtue of necessity Margaret and Mary overlooked the blight upon their present shelter left by an unsavory tenant. They only wished that Giles would put in an appearance, for at this moment there was no living person they were more anxious to see.

Both of them jumped nervously when Tidd came in to announce a visitor.

"Friend or foe?" snapped Margaret with no intention of being dramatic.

"It would be for you to say, mam," replied Tidd, "it is the Mistress Stone."

"Virlinda Stone!" exclaimed Mary, darting a quick, apprehensive glance at her sister.

Both realized that under ordinary circumstances they had no reason to suspect this friend. But these were extraordinary circumstances and the Stones were Protestants. Were they in sympathy with the present turn of events? The girls did not forget that they had frequently entertained the Stones at the Freehold and that their little daughter, Elizabeth, had been enrolled in Margaret's school.

"We will have to see her," said Margaret.

"Yes," agreed Mary, "ask her to come in, Tidd."

Virlinda Stone found the sisters standing side by side, their backs to the fireless hearth.

"My poor dears," she said, rushing to them, holding out a hand

for each. "I had to come," she explained, "after last night. We saw it all and know the worst. It is dreadful, dreadful."

Margaret and Mary returned her greeting guardedly and Virlinda was quick to sense their unusual reserve.

"These are bitter times," she went on trying to show them her genuine sympathy. "Who can know how matters will resolve themselves? But . . ." she paused, feeling she was making little headway.

"Yes?" prompted Margaret frigidly.

"Oh, my friends," observed their guest, with reproach evident in her voice, "you do not trust me."

"Oh —" began Mary, in gentle protest.

"We know not whom to trust," Margaret told her bluntly.

"And who could blame you?" asked Virlinda. "You have had a cruel blow."

An uncomfortable silence followed. Mary drew a chair for their friend and motioned her to take it. Then she sat on the bench which flanked the hearth. Only Margaret remained standing.

"I hope the Brents are not going to let this miserable rebellion destroy our friendship?"

"True friendships are not so easily destroyed," observed Margaret with an emphasis which implied a searching query.

"Ah, you make me feel better, Margaret," said Virlinda Stone, "I am glad you said that, for I have come as your true friend, indeed. Mr. Stone and I have always treasured our friendship with the Brent sisters, and he joins me now in asking you to come and stay with us until — until right order is restored here. Your servants are also welcome."

"Oh, how good you are, how good," cried Mary, melting at last.

"Yes," agreed Margaret, "very good and kind. But we feel we will be quite safe here with Giles."

"With Giles!" Dismay flooded Virlinda Stone's face. "Then you —"

"What is the matter?" demanded Margaret. "What do you know about Giles. Tell us."

Mrs. Stone overlooked the imperative tone. Her kind heart

ached for these two. She loathed being the bearer of bad news.

"Giles has gone out of the Province," she informed them gently, breaking the truth piecemeal. "Ingle has sent him prisoner to England."

Mary gasped with astonishment. Margaret was visibly shocked.

"When?" she asked.

"They took him last night. Didn't you know he had come to St. Maries to be with you? He was taken by — er — while the Freehold — He was the last to be taken up."

"And the others?"

"Clayborne delivered Giles and — "

"Clayborne!"

"Yes, didn't you know? He and Ingle are allies. They work hand in glove."

"I thought he was at Kent."

"After he and Peter Knight plundered Kent Fort Manor, Clayborne came to St. Maries to report. It is believed Giles was not aware of this."

Margaret sank down beside Mary.

"Go on," she said. "We know nothing. Do you know the whereabouts of Mary Kittamaquaand?"

"She has gone to Virginia, to Giles' new place there," Virlinda Stone informed them a trifle stiffly. "Giles and the two good Jesuits were put aboard the *Reformation* last night. The priests were chained to the deck. I fear for Father White's health," she added.

"Dear God!" begged Mary.

"Ingle is returning with them," Mrs. Stone went on, "leaving Clayborne in charge of his garrison here."

"Garrison! You compliment the brigands," snapped Margaret.

"It is treason for a priest to enter England — and of all orders, the Jesuits. They will both be executed!"

"Oh, let us pray that English justice has not sunk to such a level that a priest forcibly brought into the realm would pay such a price."

"I have no faith in English justice," retorted Margaret.

"And what will happen to Giles?" cried Mary.

"And John Lewger," put in Virlinda Stone, "he also was put aboard."

At the mention of this name the sisters exchanged glances. For the first time in days, wry smiles curved their lips. In spite of themselves, then, both laughed aloud and their guest joined them.

"Oh, what company, what company for a long voyage," laughed Margaret, "Giles in company with his most despised enemy!"

"Perhaps adversity will make them friends again," offered Virlinda Stone.

"Do you suppose they are chained together?" asked Mary.

"Oh, only the priests were chained," put in Virlinda, "and on the open deck, exposed to all the weather. Giles and Lewger share a cabin below decks."

"But look here," complained Margaret. "Why do we sit here talking about it. Is there no chance we might rescue them?"

Virlinda sucked her breath in astonishment. Indomitable Margaret! She quickly dashed any hopes of rescue.

"The *Reformation* sailed shortly after midnight," she told them. "There was a favorable wind. The ship was held only long enough to get Giles aboard. Ingle will return to Maryland."

Margaret and Mary said nothing; both asked themselves when they would see their brother again. In spite of all his faults and temperament, his teasing and aggressiveness, both girls loved him dearly; this swift, forced parting was hard to bear.

"And so please," they heard Virlinda urge, "do come and stay under our roof."

"It is good of you," Margaret said graciously. "Most wonderfully good and generous of you. But Mary and I had best stay here."

"After what happened last night?"

Virlinda Stone was a plump little woman in her middle thirties, her hair already gray, lines showing about her mouth and eyes. As she spoke now, her evident disappointment and anxiety showed so keenly in her expressive face that she seemed almost to double her age then and there.

Mary, always quick to perceive shadings of emotion in others, said, "It is not that we are not grateful, dear. You are wonderful to want to risk having us with you. But that is just the point, it would be a risk for you."

"Exactly," endorsed Margaret, "We — our presence might

bring catastrophe to your home. We could never forgive ourselves for that."

Virlinda smiled relief. So, that was the only drawback. They felt their adherence to Catholicism would make them *persona non grata* in a Protestant home.

"I see your difficulty," she said smilingly, "but I think we have overcome that. Our household has taken the oath of allegiance to the Lord Protector — a matter of expediency, you understand. Under our roof you would be, as our guests, *untouchable*."

"Catholics are never *untouchable*," said Margaret, clipping out her words.

"And we could not take that oath," put in Mary, a trace of reproach in her voice.

"But under our protection it would not be necessary," Virlinda patiently explained. "Because we have taken the oath we have been assured our property will not be harmed. And anyone we harbor will be safe."

"I fear you risk too much," replied Margaret slowly, pausing. And then going on, "You perhaps cannot understand; the oath is important to us. As long as I can remember, the Brents have declined certain oaths, to their great travail and impoverishment, because they could not compromise conscience. If we accepted your hospitality — the sanctuary you offer is indeed inviting — we would be safe only because of an oath we could not in conscience take, ourselves. Forgive us, Virlinda, but we have to live with our own consciences."

"But you are so good to offer," Mary hastened to follow up. "You see, as Margaret says, we would be much too likely to bring harm in the door with us — just because promises are usually forgotten if a Catholic scalp is about."

"But your great charity and kindness touch us deeply," Margaret added. "For our servants, except for Tidd, we could accept, as none of them are of our faith. But I think we may send them to Virginia — perhaps Mr. Stone would help us in that. Maybe you will ask him when you convey our deep gratitude and appreciation to him."

Virlinda Stone shook her head and looked at both girls sadly.

"You are very strict with yourselves," she said in a moment, "but

I admire you for it. It is inspiring to have a Faith so strong one would risk death rather than compromise. I see your point, but I do think, under the circumstances you could, in good conscience, make an exception. But, there, it is for you to decide. You may come any time. God alone knows how these sad events will evolve, but they cannot be of long duration here, where all of us, regardless of our private beliefs, have been so close and so friendly." She rose to go then, but paused again, to add, "Promise me if you want for one single comfort, you will send me word. We will see that your servants get to Virginia."

"Thank you, dear," said Mary embracing her, "God bless you for your good, open heart."

"I thank you too," added Margaret. "You are an angel, and I pray God we part the same good friends we have always been."

Fifteen

AFTER this visit, Mary, cautious as a snail, withdrew into the White House and could not be persuaded for some months, to emerge by day or night. She was bewildered and unnerved; her brother's house was her last remaining security, and she lived each day in great fear that it might be fired and leveled to the ground the following night. Might not Clayborne, himself, further disgorge his spleen against Giles by the plunder if not also the destruction of the White House in the same manner as he and Peter Knight had mutilated Kent Fort Manor?

On one point both girls were determined. They would not run away. They would stand and face the enemy. Virginia, they knew, would give them refuge, despite the fact they were Catholics, for now Virginia alone held out for the King; those loyal to him, regardless of religious affiliation, were welcome.

Margaret remained with her sister throughout the long daylight hours, but at night she went out to visit those other Catholic families who remained on their land. She had naught to offer them but cheerfulness, which she seldom felt in her heart, and assurances that assistance would surely come to liberate the City from the clutches of the invader. There was no substance whatever to these assurances beyond her personal hopes, prayers and intuition. But fearful souls felt the oppressive weight of anxiety lift somewhat after Margaret's visits. With her smile and her heartening words she left new courage in her wake as well as the pathetic little comforts which she begged or borrowed from one to take to another — an extra coverlet or shawl, a few eggs or pat of butter, herbs to brew a tea for an ailing one, a salve to soothe a cut or burn. Her co-religionists came to look upon Margaret as the now undisputed

leader of the Colony and to place their whole trust in her hopes that very soon a better day would dawn upon St. Maries.

At the White House the sisters occupied the one large chamber on the second floor which was reached only by a ladder. Tidd and Bob Murdick, Protestant, an indentured servant lately brought out of England, were installed downstairs. Tidd arranged for all the other servants to go to Westmoreland County. So great was their concern for the roan that, much to Mary's horror, Margaret insisted Tidd convert the ample cold pantry into a stall for her. If she was to be stolen from under their noses, the thief would have to disturb the household to take her.

For several weeks the small household took turns standing watch, just as a crew at sea, ready to give instant alarm should another mob descend upon them. But in time, piecing together this bit of news and that, which Margaret and Bob Murdick gathered, they concluded the invaders were tired of their game; and they relaxed their vigilance only to renew it now and then for short spells when some other Catholic home was occasionally pillaged.

Bob Murdick, loyal and sympathetic, proved invaluable. He accompanied Margaret on her nightly ventures, which were made on foot. While Margaret called upon the Catholic families, Bob Murdick would go to Jellie's Tavern, mingle with the other guests, and so keep the White House aware of the fluctuating pulse of the opposition.

One night, several months later, Bob brought word that Ingle had not only returned to the colony, but had plundered Cross Manor.

"No honor among brigands," observed Margaret sarcastically.

"Now, now," temporized Mary, who in the depths of her heart still had a lingering admiration for Cornwaleys which she would not own openly, "for all his unexplainable actions you can scarcely call the master of Cross Manor a brigand."

"I marvel at Ingle's ingratitude," replied Margaret. "But for the stupid vanity of the Captain, Giles would probably have had Ingle's head rolling in the dust."

"Even the best of us make mistakes," said Mary.

"At least the beast did not fire the Manor," countered Margaret. "Perhaps he desisted, because he was grateful that the Captain had

fallen for his ruse and thus enabled him to escape when he was previously here."

Neither of them could then know that Cross Manor was destined to stand for centuries, outliving all the other houses at St. Maries, save Calvert's Rest; and that the gardens so carefully laid out by Captain Cornwaleys, himself, would remain to delight generations yet unborn.

The colonists began their spring planting later than usual that year. No one could prophesy how long the present lull in marauding would last, but it became imperative to plant or face famine. When the crops were ready to harvest, the brigands made another destructive attack. They garnered enough for their own needs, and put the torch to many more fields. But most of the planters fought the fires and salvaged sufficient food for themselves.

One night William Stone told Margaret that Edward Hill had been appointed Governor of Maryland. "I have seen his commission," Stone went on, his face grave and troubled, "it was signed by Mr. Calvert, 'this 30th of July, 1646, In Virginia.'"

"Never!" cried Margaret. "It must be a forgery!"

"Either that or he signed under duress," said Stone.

"Where is Kequutan, where they say Leonard is hiding?" asked Mary the next day when Margaret gave her this piece of news.

"It is a miserable little hamlet on the James," replied Margaret recalling her long dormant premonition. "It is on the northern shore, not far inland from the sea. Giles and I were there, you recall, after suffering two reluctant weeks of sham hospitality at Chelsea, the home of the infamous Edward Hill."

"You are growing in the use of strong language," reproved Mary.

"Any friend of Bennett in Providence who, in turn, is a friend and imitator of Clayborne is infamous to me!" she exploded impatiently, chaffing under Mary's criticism.

"You give way so to emotion," put in Mary, heaping fuel upon the fire she had started.

Margaret riveted her eyes upon her sister.

"This Hill affair is the last outrage," she said heatedly. "I am going to Leonard."

"No! Good heavens, Margaret, you must be out of your

mind. Your undignified nocturnal prowling is bad enough. For pity's sake," Mary implored, "do not leave the Province."

"I am going to Leonard," answered Margaret crisply cool. "I will be out of my mind if things continue as they are with no relief. I have always known that someday I would go back to that insignificant little hole," she went on reflectively. "I am going to find out if Leonard has settled there for the rest of his natural life."

Mary protested violently. Margaret would not listen.

That night she sent Bob Murdick to William Stone to ask for a list of landmarks by which to steer a course from St. Maries to Kequutan. Margaret, herself, went to see Thomas Greene, incidentally for similar information, more particularly to discuss tentative plans which she was formulating for the reconquest of St. Maries. She instructed Tidd to inspect Giles' little sailing boat which had been his means of travel between St. Maries and Kent and which they knew was still safe at its sheltered dock. Tidd was to provision it for their trip, to inspect the spritsail, make sure all was ship-shape.

During the following day Margaret was so absorbed with her study of the information William Stone had given Bob, and her impatience for night to fall, that she barely noticed Mary's unusual aloofness or the wounded look in her eyes. It never occurred to her that the previous night Mary had been left entirely alone at the White House.

They were to head southeast when they started, William Stone had advised, and then hugging the Virginia shoreline they would pass the mouth of the Great Wicomico River, then the broad Rappahannock, then the bay into which Virginia's little Severn River emptied. Next they would meet the York, then the James, itself. Except for the last few leagues the whole trip would be made down Chesapeake Bay; there would be no occasion to venture out into the open sea.

Bob Murdick and Margaret shoved off at twilight. Mary and Tidd watched them go.

The August night was damp, not too cool, altogether very pleasant. Later the moon came up and brilliantly lighted their way. Margaret manned the oar at the stern by which the small craft was

steered; Bob Murdick tended the sail, getting the greatest advantage from the slightest breeze. So, at last, they reached Kequutan. It was another night. Bob brought down the sail and beached the craft in a secluded spot along the river bank which was overhung with weeping willows. Then Margaret sent the boy ashore to find Leonard.

It seemed to her that she waited a century.

Yet, impatient as she was to see Leonard, the peace and solitude in which she now found herself was a soothing balm to her heavy heart and weary spirit. Padding the stern seat with a few quilts which she had provided, she made herself a soft berth. Ever so gently the little boat rocked on the slowly moving surface of the James. Margaret relaxed. Peering through the fine lacework of the willow branches overhead, she dreamily scanned the moonlit sky.

But her mind would not rest.

Her thoughts turned to England. As the wind blew there, so, eventually, it must in Maryland: and Cromwell held the bellows. She knew the King's forces had been completely routed at Naseby in June '45, and Bristol had surrendered in September. Sir Thomas Fairfax had conquered West Devonshire and Cornwall; the Prince of Wales was a refugee in France and his father had surrendered to the Scotch army. The last word Margaret had received told of the surrender by the Marquess of Worcester of his castle Raglan in Monmouthshire. Thus had fallen the final fortress of royalty in England. How well Margaret recalled Raglan — Holy Mass in the Chapel — their parting with the Marquess. . .

And then they had gone to Wardour. Wardour! Margaret could not realize it was no more. Thomas, husband of Blanche who had so graciously entertained them in 1638, had succeeded to the title in '39 on his father's death. And Thomas had gone off to fight for the King along with his son, Henry. It was during their absence that Blanche Arundell, with only twenty-five servants at her command, had withstood an eight-day siege by thirteen hundred of Cromwell's men only to capitulate on May 8th, 1643, on honorable terms. In that year, too, Thomas had been killed, leaving the title, and Wardour, to his son Henry. This third Lord Arundell, discovering his wife and children to be prisoners at Hock-

ing House on the Wardour estate, had sacrificed his castle to dislodge General Ludlow and the garrison which occupied it. On the 18th of March in '44 Henry had tunnelled under Wardour, placed a mine there and blown the 14th century castle to bits.

Now, thought Margaret, what will become of Maryland? Should she remove to Virginia? Could she be at peace without the Sacraments? She did not even have these in Maryland now. Sanctuary, indeed!

William Stone had told her Ingle's commission instructed him to "subdue the papist colony" and had emanated from no less a person than Robert Rich, second Earl of Warwick whose avowed aim, as chief governor of the American provinces, was "chiefly to preserve and advance the true Protestant religion among the said planters." Did this explain the appointment of Hill as present governor of Maryland?

The Earl of Warwick!

Margaret sighed. He was a grandson of Richard Rich who had received knighthood as a reward for his perjury at the trial of Thomas More. He was the same who had first imprisoned William. Since that long gone day the Earl of Warwick, a man of disarming charm and ready wit, had juggled political advantage with intuitive expediency to become not only a backer of the Jamestown venture, but of Plymouth, Boston, Rhode Island and Connecticut as well. He was now proclaimed the "Temporal Head of the Puritans." Margaret envisaged him signing Ingle's commission to subdue Catholic Maryland with an easy conscience and proud flourish. She smiled to herself.

'By now,' she mused, 'one would suppose King, Parliament, "Protector," or pauper would understand that neither Princes, despots, states, armies, tortures or executions can destroy the true religion because it is Divine and its Founder promised to be with His church only for all days, even to the consummation of the world.'

She doubted Cecilius would ever be able to come to Maryland, and her heart ached for him. But how he had blundered! He had first sent Ingle to Maryland with the two secular priests. Was this God's chastisement for Cecilius' dispute with the Jesuit Provincial?

A disturbance on the shore attracted Margaret's attention. She

jumped nervously, and this sudden emotion frightened her. She did not call out. Definitely someone was approaching. Might it be some of Opechancanough's braves? Even in her fright, she could recall with a wry smile, that it had long since been known that the victim of Sir William Berkeley's sadist exhibition at James City had not been the old Chief. His presumed captor, Clayborne, had either deliberately or unknowingly played a grim joke upon the colony. Opechancanough was still at large.

Nearer and nearer came the unmistakable footsteps. Margaret was too alarmed to take comfort in the fact that whoever it was made no attempt to approach with stealth. Her every muscle was tense. She saw her musket lying on the hatch amidship, its shape distorted by the willow shadowed moonlight. "Careless!" she scolded herself. But she was too frightened to recover it.

Then, as suddenly as though there had been no warning noises, the willow branches parted, and Leonard with Duke at his heels stood looking down on her. In an instant he was in the boat and Margaret was safe in his arms. Overwrought by a bevy of conflicting fears and emotions, she clung to him desperately, as though in his embrace alone could she find surcease and safe haven.

He kissed her, and then relaxed his embrace.

"Let me look at you," he begged as he stepped back yet kept his strong hands on her slight, thin shoulders. "Are you all right, my Margaret?"

Searchingly his tired eyes scanned her sunburned face and wind-blown hair. As she returned his gaze she noted with an inward pain the deep lines about his mouth and eyes; how he had aged in exile. She took to her heart, the while, his possessive "my Margaret" and cherished it.

They sat down together then, Leonard carefully pulling her light cape over her shoulders. "These August nights can be treacherous," he said. Raising her chin with his right hand, he leaned above her and kissed her lips. "It is so good to see you," he whispered, "but you were reckless, yes, foolish, to risk this trip."

For reply Margaret only rested her head against his shoulder, and then taking his hand in both of hers, she said quietly, "Only

now that I see you, Leonard, do I realize how much I have missed you, and how I have worried about your safety. . ." She broke off, raising her head to see his face again. "You have suffered!"

For a while, quiet descended upon them, broken only by the water chattily lapping against the side of the boat. Save for the interference of the overhanging willows, moonlight flooded all about them making the surface of the water beyond the shadows a sheet of gleaming silver.

"Such magnificent beauty," murmured Margaret, "quiet, peaceful. Only man makes confusion."

"And the night chorus of wild life," put in Leonard, smiling at her. Not until then had Margaret realized that ashore, tree toads, cicadas and numerous lesser insects had all along been producing a ceaseless nocturnal obbligato to her silent, conflicting thoughts.

"Now," said Leonard at last, removing his arm from Margaret's shoulder and sitting forward, half turning towards her, "now, my Margaret, what madness has brought you here?"

"What madness keeps you in Virginia?" she asked in quick retort, "have you deserted Maryland for all time?"

"Are things very frightful?" Leonard asked in reply.

Margaret smiled at him. "I suggest we draw straws," she said deliberately, "shortest one asks all the questions. One of us must begin to answer."

They both laughed softly.

"Very well," said Leonard, "I will answer yours first. The madness that keeps me here is Sir William's failure to accede to my suggestion of more than three years ago, that our two colonies together raise a standing army to hold out should the rebellion at home reach these shores. Now I am trying to raise an army of one hundred men to retake Cecilius' Province."

"A most satisfactory answer," allowed Margaret. "Is Sir William disposed to help?"

"Indeed he is, especially since his return from England. It is the volunteers who are reluctant. The men do not wish to leave their farms, just as in Maryland. They have all been pressed so many times for Indian assaults."

"Why cannot Sir William just sign a decree?" interrupted Margaret.

"Englishmen will only fight Englishmen voluntarily. They will not be 'decreed' into such an engagement."

"Not even for a premium?"

"Premium!" Leonard snorted in his beard. "Premium, indeed! I scarce know how I can pay the usual allotments. I will have to pledge my own estate and my good brother's."

"Oh," exclaimed Margaret, "the people will cheerfully accept a levy for that expense."

"I am not so sure," cautioned Leonard. "You forget that our own have suffered impoverishing depredation, and our Protestant neighbors, — do you think they would pay such a tax?"

"Why not?" demanded Margaret. "You forget what Maryland has given them. Have Protestants no gratitude?"

"No doubt the handful at St. Maries have," Leonard allowed, "but the majority at Providence would not be so disposed. Already a debt has piled up. Fleete has kept his garrison of twenty men at Piscataway for two years. They must be paid."

"Perhaps they have been — by Clayborne," said Margaret, bitterly.

"Who can tell?" sighed Leonard. "But I can say this: slowly, much too slowly, I am raising a small force pledged to recover St. Maries with me."

"How soon?" begged Margaret.

"I would start now if I dared," Leonard told her, "but I have only sixty men. Ingle has two hundred. Sir William has promised to arm and equip a hundred for me. I dare not risk the lives of sixty until the army is strong enough to assure success."

"And you think one hundred men will defeat two hundred?"

"One hundred men fighting on the side of justice — yes."

"I pray God will send you all you need," Margaret said, her brow furrowed with anxiety. "You must recover the Province." Then, suddenly putting her hand on his arm, she asked, "Leonard, did you sign Hill's commission?"

He looked at her frankly.

"What do you think?"

Margaret dropped her eyes, patted his arm, then pulled her cape more closely about her. A breeze was coming up across the water. The moon was waning.

"Where is your boy?" asked Leonard. "You should be taking advantage of this breeze to start back."

"He will come presently," Margaret told him. "He is trying to get some corn for us; our crops were burned before we could harvest them."

Leonard said nothing. He stood up and scanned the heavens.

Margaret watched him intently. For many weary months she had longed for his company. She frankly admitted to herself now, after his long, forced absence, that he was important in her life; he was Maryland's anchor — and her's, too. 'You love him,' said her heart, and this time her mind offered no contradiction. She regretted that they would now have to part again.

"I am sorry about the corn," he said at last, "I . . ."

"You are not to worry about us," Margaret cut him short. "And I want you to know we can help with the soldier's pay. Our land in Westmoreland County is under cultivation. We should have much tobacco."

"Cecilius will thank you for that assistance — a temporary loan," Leonard qualified. "Please God, our trade with England remains normal."

Not for an instant did either of them objectively consider the tremendous odds against them.

Then Margaret outlined to him the tentative plans which she had been formulating in her mind for some days.

"Do you think, perhaps, by the Nativity . . ."

"Oh, yes," said Leonard, "quite likely by then I will be ready."

"Good," said Margaret, eagerly. "And remember our plan should work because all of Ingle's men will be drinking and carousing just to show their defiance of Christmas. I thought . . ."

"Exactly," broke in Leonard, "but be cautious, my Margaret. Do not raise hopes — just — well, it would be best to let all this come as a surprise — wholly unexpected. Do you agree?"

"Yes, I do, Leonard. You are wise and quite right, and you may trust me. You must succeed! May the Babe of Bethlehem keep you."

For answer Leonard pressed her hand.

They were quiet for a while, both absorbed in thought. Now and then, one or the other would make mention of some small de-

tail, but for the most part both silently contemplated the plans they had drawn.

After a time, Margaret at last broke the spell which anticipation of the future had laid upon them.

"The night grows old," she said, "tell me, Leonard, have you had the consolation of the Sacraments? Are the Jesuits here with you? Will you bring them back when you come?"

He darted her a quick glance. His face was stormy.

"No!" he said brusquely.

Margaret caught her breath sharply.

Leonard took her hand and held it tightly.

"No, because they are dead," he explained dully. "Mysteriously, suddenly, all three of them died!"

"Leonard!"

"I suspect poison," he went on. "Virginia's hospitality has been no guarantee of friendship from all Virginians. Catholics may seek refuge here, but not Catholicism."

A chill came over Margaret and she shuddered visibly.

"Darling," exclaimed Leonard, gently encircling her slight self in his arm, "take care. I am sorry I was so crude. There — there, they have gone to God. All is well now with the good fathers."

"Yes," admitted Margaret unable to control her shivering, "but it is awful, awful. In no place, it seems, may we be free."

"There will be a place," Leonard tried to reassure her, "we will make such a place. This is a vast continent stretching beyond the limits of English patents. France and Spain hold some portions of America, but . . ."

"But we cannot desert Cecilius," Margaret supplied.

"I cannot," replied Leonard, "you are not so obligated."

"But . . ."

"Listen, Margaret," Leonard interrupted her, "I may not desert my brother's interests, for I am sworn to protect them. But my children need not suffer. . . ."

"The children?" Margaret was incredulous.

"It has been arranged," Leonard told her, "as soon as St. Maries is retaken that I shall get word to Giles. He is at Larke Stoke — Sir William had word. He was able to buy his freedom, have no

concern for him. When all is clear here, he will return and bring my son William and baby Anne."

Leonard mentioned the names of his children as though they were sacred words.

"Such wee babes," she complained then, "to make such a dangerous voyage. You think Giles can care for them?"

"Their nurse will come, too."

"Oh."

"And now, my Margaret, now . . ."

"Yes?" Margaret looked at him inquisitively.

"Now — oh, Margaret, I pray you say me yes this time. When my children come, will you — those sweet innocents deserve more than a nurse to care for them — Margaret . . ."

In the waning light he looked deep into her eyes, begging in eloquent silence what he could not put into words; fearing the pain of another refusal which now, he felt, would be more than he could bear. He saw pools of tears in Margaret's eyes. In the woods far behind them an owl hooted. All else was stillness.

"Yes," she breathed softly, her voice muffled against his bosom where the frills of his waistcoat hid her blushes from his gaze.

"Yes, yes, my Leonard."

With a free hand he raised her face to his and kissed her lips. 'Here,' said Margaret's heart to her mind, 'is your peace.'

"My precious one," she heard Leonard whisper in her ear.

So they greeted the dawn.

Sixteen

MARGARET returned to Maryland with three important pieces of news. The item about Giles and the children she shared with Mary. The plans she and Leonard had laid were, at his request, divulged to Thomas Greene and William Stone. The news nearest her heart Margaret cherished there, and told no one.

But her friends were quick to note a new light in her eye, a genuine cheerfulness in her voice, a sprightliness to her step and all took courage from these signs.

As Christmas drew near, Margaret, with the help of Mr. Greene and Mr. Stone, began to prepare for Leonard's return. Catholic and Protestant alike readily responded to the suggestion of a Carol Service at the Chapel on Christmas Eve. None suspected the event would be more than that. The contemplation of this happy gathering contributed to a new spirit of cheer which swept the City as Christmas Eve drew near.

No one invited Governor Hill, but Mr. Stone made him aware of the plan. Two days before the twenty-fourth, Bob Murdick reported to Margaret that Hill had relayed the news to Clayborne at Jellie's Tavern.

"May as well let them indulge themselves," Clayborne had said. "Parliament abolished this popish holiday two years ago, but let the people sing. Papistry is dead here now. There are no priests, no idolatrous Mass. No harm in singing."

But when Christmas Eve came, the plan did not operate precisely as she and Leonard had planned it. Margaret had been right about the carousing of Ingle's men, but she had overlooked a possibility.

As the colonists assembled in the little Chapel that cold and clear

Christmas Eve of 1646, both the Brent sisters knew sharp pain because they missed so many faces once familiar here. Anne Lewger had come with them; worry over the fate of her husband had aged her markedly. But they entered the small building almost as strangers entering a private home uninvited. Seeing the Stones and Greens together, the three women joined them. Almost every seat was taken. Margaret wished she could control her thumping heart. She had not been so excited for years. When they left the Chapel this evening —

Someone had thought to place lighted candles on the altar and others had decorated the interior with fragrant pine boughs. Contemplating their glistening green, Margaret remembered that green was the liturgical color symbolic of hope. Both sisters thought of Father White, and of Father Fisher who here had offered Mass their first morning in Maryland. Their hearts were sick with longing for the consolation of this Greatest Prayer, for the presence of a priest, for the vital sustenance of Holy Communion.

Governor Hill entered the Chapel, dispersing their thoughts. A guarded hush fell upon the assembly. No one smiled a welcome. As befit his station he took a front seat. And as if his entrance had been a signal, John Wheatley then stepped forward and began the carol singing.

Voices responded with good volume. This was the first public gathering since Ingle's invasion. It was good to be together again. Carol after carol, verse after verse — interrupted only for the reading by Mr. Stone of the first portion of the second chapter of St. Luke — and then another carol and another.

But then —

Governor Hill must have been the first to notice it, for as a rat will leave a sinking ship, he made a hasty exit in the midst of a hymn. Little attention was paid to him, few cared whether he was physically or spiritually indisposed.

But now others near the front saw what he had seen — a little curl of smoke creeping around from the back of the altar. John Wheatley did not see it, but he noted that with graduated suddenness, as though automatically turned off at brief intervals, row after row ceased to sing, and a look of horror spread from face to face.

Margaret was beside herself. She looked at Thomas Greene

and William Stone and violently shook her head. This was not a part of the plan. Suddenly there was a single scream followed by a mad rush for the one exit. Bodies crushed and squeezed through the narrow doorway, calls for family members not immediately seen mingled with groans of pain as some were hurt, even trampled, in the swift exodus.

As soon as they were safely outside, both Brent sisters, suspecting foul play — had not Clayborne said “let them sing” — looked about for Governor Hill. He was nowhere to be seen. But some small distance away, huddled in the protecting shadows were small groups of drunken grimacing ruffians, Ingle’s brigands.

The smoked-out worshippers did not fly the scene. Indignation held them there. Some assisted the hurt and hysterical; others watched how greedily the flames sought the wood trim about the brick walls of Maryland’s first Chapel. Once inside, the flames went to work with a roar for there was plenty in the pine and birch interior to assuage their appetite. Smoke poured from the doorway and the few small windows. Now the wooden roof was afire; breathlessly the onlookers waited for it to crash in.

Margaret knew an inner agony. She and Leonard had planned to gather all the colonists here where they would be safe from possible harm or bloodshed when he came to retake St. Maries. Here they were, many of them hurt, all awed by the fire, and where was Leonard?

The populace did not notice that Ingle’s men drew nearer and nearer to leer and laugh at their indignation; nor did they hear their curses and blasphemies hurtling through the night air.

And for their part, Ingle’s men did not notice that behind them lurking among trees or ditches were yet other men; armed men, slowly but surely creeping closer and closer. Confident of themselves before the helpless crowd, Ingle’s men had left their arms stacked here and there in the shadows from which they had emerged.

Suddenly, above the noise of the crackling fire, a musket shot rang out. Then another and another. The congregation dispersed, thinking the brigands were firing upon them. So it was that in a twinkling, only Ingle’s mercenaries remained in clusters

before the burning Chapel, their bleary eyes riveted upon the retreating congregation as though to determine who had fired the shots.

Then through the night air beyond these men, came a roar of voices, many, many voices: "Hey for St. Maries! Hey for St. Maries!"

The brigands about-faced, incredulous, and began to run for their guns, now so far from them. But they ran into fire — blazing muskets behind every tree and knoll, and they fell. The merciless fire did not cease until every one of Ingle's men then on the scene had fallen.

The Marylanders watched with awed astonishment. Again Margaret's heart thumped within her. She wanted to cry out with relief, and indeed she did lead the cries of thanksgiving and welcome which now rose from the colonists. Boldly now, all came from their retreat into the light reflected from the still madly burning Chapel. But this fire was secondary now. From the shadows on the opposite side of the burning building emerged Leonard Calvert, leading his Virginia army to the rescue and deliverance of St. Maries and her people.

There was so much to be done those first few months after Leonard's return that Margaret saw little of him; but her happiness was to know that he had returned and redeemed Maryland.

Hurriedly they had laid a few sketchy plans. The first Jesuit to return would marry them; their home would be Calvert's Rest because it was a more secluded spot for the children than St. Gabriel's where persons came continually on Government business.

On the second of January, Leonard called for an oath of fealty to the Lord Baltimore, promising pardon to all who had assisted in the late rebellion who would now swear allegiance to his brother. Next he recalled the Assembly convened by Governor Hill, who had returned to Chelsea in quick retreat. Day and night, Leonard labored to restore peace, order and good will.

Early in February John Lewger returned and was immediately reinstated as Secretary, Leonard retaining the function of His Lordship's attorney. The Council re-assembled, all save Giles who was

still absent. Leonard offered his vacancy to William Stone, but the latter declined. Leonard urged him to accept, showing the advantage and wisdom of having the Maryland Protestants so represented in the Government. But Stone averred that he could not adequately represent the diverse political persuasions or contrary concepts of his Protestant neighbors.

Mr. Copely, Father Fisher, still carrying his now worthless safe conduct from the King, returned with John Lewger; however he did not come to St. Maries but went immediately to Virginia where he chose to live in hiding until such time as Maryland was again ready to receive the Jesuit mission. If the priest would not come to them, Margaret and Leonard would have to go to him. But when? In the present circumstances it was imperative for the public weal that Leonard remain in the Province.

March 25th ushered in the year 1647. What would it bring forth? And why, Margaret asked Mary that morning as they sipped their berry tea, did England begin a New Year on the Feast of the Annunciation if it would throw out "popery" and all its feasts and festivals.

Ten days later, early in April, Giles returned, bringing as he had promised Leonard's children. Little William Calvert was four and baby Anne barely three. Giles seemed relieved to turn them over to his sisters. They were domiciled at the White House until their father's home should be ready to receive them. Leonard came more often then, although his visits were brief; but he dearly loved these small children of his, and chafed with impatience if a day was too busy to permit a glimpse of them.

But before he could enjoy the domestic contentment for which he longed, there were things yet to be done. Later that same month he assembled his army again, having now impoverished himself to pay their allotments thus far, and taking Giles, too, he again marched on Kent. It seemed to Leonard that most of his Maryland administration had been punctuated by periodic marches on Kent. Now Clayborne with an army half the size of Leonard's still held sway there.

The reduction of the Island was short work. The inhabitants long ago preferred Lord Baltimore's jurisdiction to that of Clay-

borne, and Leonard's arrival was welcomed by all, who readily took the oath of fealty. As usual Clayborne had scented his coming and the battle that might ensue, and had taken himself off, under cover of night. This had ever been his habit in holding Kent: to run when blood was about to be spilt.

Leonard remained briefly then on Kent, to allow Giles time to go to Virginia for his wife. Giles returned with Mary Kittamaqua and to take up residence for the time being at Kent Fort Manor — what was then left of it — for he wanted to supervise the rebuilding, retrieve what he could of his stolen cattle, and tend his planting.

It was mid-May when Leonard returned to St. Maries. It seemed, then, that order was well nigh re-established. The scars of the recent rebellion would have to wear away with time; but for the present peace reigned again. Now, if he could but persuade Father Fisher to come back to St. Inigoes, perhaps at long last he could turn his attention to those things of his heart which mattered most to himself.

One evening towards the end of the month he found time for a leisurely visit at the White House. He hesitated at first, for a wound he had received in his leg, while landing at Kent, was giving him some slight bother; and Margaret, he knew, would fuss. He had already put off his visit for longer than he liked, so at last he took a chance with her possible scolding and rode by about supper time.

As he dismounted at the foot of the path his children with piercing squeals of joy, toddled down to meet him. Margaret watched from the doorway. But as he came forward to greet William and Anne she noticed his painful limp.

She rushed to him.

"You are hurt," she cried, putting her arm about him.

"A scratch," he said, trying not to let his mild concern color his voice. He fondled his children with his free hand. "I got it at Kent, but it is nothing," he told Margaret.

"Nothing!" exclaimed Margaret. "Then are you limping to amuse the children?"

He looked at her reproachfully, but did not answer.

Once indoors, while the children clamored for his attention, Margaret noticed with alarm that his cheeks were flushed with fever, his eyes over-bright.

"I do believe you should be in bed," she said. "You have a sickness."

"My Margaret," he replied fondly pulling her head down to reach her ear, "you are right." Little Anne wriggled in his lap. "A fever of impatience is upon me," whispered Leonard to Margaret. "How much longer am I to be a guest in the house of my children?"

Seventeen

JUST as he had anticipated, Margaret spent the evening "fussing." When he took his departure all manner of instructions rang in his ears. He was to send for Doctor Waldron in Virginia who had taken care of his shoulder wound, and healed it. The wound in his leg must be tended immediately. Margaret made him promise. Had he promised? He could not remember. She had told him to rest, to drink plenty of water to reduce his fever; indeed, but for the fact that his children occupied all the spare room the White House afforded, he would probably have been put to bed then and there. He was not to walk about until his leg was healed. He was . . . Buzzingly the directions spun about in his head; he swayed in his saddle as the old mare trotted her homeward way.

Later he could not clearly remember just what he had done after leaving the White House; but within twenty four hours Bob Murdick brought word that Leonard was not only ill, but out of his head. He had gone to Calvert's Rest; yes, the dog was with him. Margaret sent Bob flying at once to inquire the whereabouts of Doctor Waldron, having heard he had come to St. Maries to see a patient up-country; and taking Tidd with her, she set out immediately for Calvert's Rest.

They found Leonard delirious, babbling ridiculous commands to his dog, painfully tossing on his bed, his wounded leg swollen to almost thrice its normal size. The malodorous discharge from the wound was caked on the cruelly drawn skin, and a dark red streak coursed upward towards the still healthy flesh above his knee. The room itself was heavy with the foul stench of poison.

Margaret set Tidd to work preparing warm water. She opened

windows, blinds and door to air out the room. Duke followed her about whining and wagging his tail to say he was so glad she had come at last. He kept constantly trotting back to Leonard's bed, as though to make quite sure Margaret understood all was not well. There was no question about her understanding. She went about with a heavy heart.

Now with a basin of cool water in her lap, she bathed Leonard's face and neck, and from a pewter cup, she poured drops of water, a few at a time, between his parched and swollen lips.

It was evening before Doctor Waldron arrived. He had come down from Resurrection Manor, Cornwaleys' country estate where a tenant had sustained a hard fall, breaking his back, the Doctor said, shaking his head. He lost no time in examining Leonard's wound which Margaret had cleaned as best she could and kept moist with warm, wet cloths. She gritted her teeth and held fast to Leonard's clenched fists as the doctor lanced a cross on the sore and tender flesh. Pus gushed forth, and blood as well. Sweat poured from Leonard's face and hands. But later he rested, and towards morning his fever subsided, the swelling in his leg decreased, and he sank into a deep sleep.

About noon next day Doctor Waldron left. Margaret stepped outside with him, leaving Tidd and Duke at the bedside. Doctor Waldron looked grave.

"This is very serious," he told her, "that leg should be amputated, at once."

"Oh," cried Margaret, covering her mouth with her hand to stifle the sound.

"I am not sure, even then, that the operation would forestall the inevitable."

"You mean . . . ?"

"I mean it has gone too long, Mistress Brent. I have never seen recovery from such a neglected wound."

Margaret's heart stood still. As it resumed beating again, with a heavy, dull thump in her breast, she wanted to cry and scream aloud because once again destiny was snatching happiness from her grasp. For a brief time she thought only of herself and not of Leonard. Later this selfish self-pity gave her many anguished moments of remorse.

"And if I should let you amputate?" she heard her voice ask the doctor.

She did not notice Doctor Waldron's arched eyebrow over her possessive tone; but she distinctly heard his answer, "On my word, Mistress Brent, I doubt it would save his life, and the pain would be more than he could bear in his present condition."

Margaret bit her lip. Hot tears beat against her eyeballs. She stood facing the water, clenching and unclenching her fists behind her back. June in all its warm and brilliant glory flooded the scene with the sheer joy of being. The air was pregnant with the fragrance of new grass, new leaves — the resurrection! But Margaret saw and felt none of this. For the second time in her life death was taking love away, out of reach, beyond her realization.

"I will be back in twenty-four hours," she heard the doctor say, and realized he was mounting his horse. "Your boy luckily caught me just in time. I was about to return home. But I will stay at the Tavern if you want to send for me."

"Oh, doctor," Margaret started as though roused from a coma, "would you — will you — can you get word to Father Fisher? He is at Rappahannock. Tell him what is befalling us. Beg him to come. Leonard — Governor Calvert will want him."

"Of course," said the doctor sympathetically, though a Puritan himself, "I know what this means to you. I will do my best."

"Thank you," said Margaret sincerely, "and God go with you."

Then she went back to the sickroom.

She remained in that room of pain and death for five days, dressing Leonard's wound day and night, comforting him in his lucid moments, urging upon him the broths and noggs prepared by Tidd. Out of doors June grew apace. The birds sang the day long, an endless joyous welcome to summer in her soft graciousness. But the Governor of Maryland lay dying. Father Fisher did not come.

On the morning of the ninth of June Leonard wakened to find his mind thoroughly clear. He knew, too, that he would not see the summer in this year of 1647. He saw Tidd at his side, and off in a corner was Margaret, utterly exhausted, sound asleep in a stiff chair.

"Tidd," said Leonard in a low, serious voice, "go fetch Mistress Mary and Mr. Thomas Greene."

"Yes, sir," agreed Tidd, "as soon as Mistress Margaret wakens."

"No, no," contradicted Leonard impatiently, "go now, man. And — wait — I will need witnesses — let me think — "

He paused and Tidd silently waited. Margaret stirred in her corner, choked slightly and came wide awake instantly. She jumped up, as though she had been called, and started towards the bed.

"Yes, Leonard?" she said.

"I did not call you," he said, in the slightly cross tone characteristic of the sick.

He looked at her curiously, then turned to Tidd. Margaret stood still as though dazed and puzzled.

"You have those names I gave you?" she heard Leonard say.

"Yes, sir," replied Tidd.

"Then go to my brother's manor, St. John's, and summon James Linsey and Francis Anketill. They are his well affected servants and I can trust them. Hurry, man."

"Right, sir," said Tidd, and with no word to Margaret he left the room.

When he had gone, Margaret knelt beside the bed.

Leonard looked searchingly into her eyes, and he saw that she knew.

She bowed her head on his shoulder, his hand reached up to caress it.

After some time, he said, "I wish I might see Father Fisher."

"He will come," Margaret reassured him, wishing she herself were really sure of this fact.

Leonard sighed. His hand searched for Margaret's and held it tightly. Margaret wanted to cry, but she remained still and silent. Time was so short; they could say so much to each other this way, and yet, what was there to say? Margaret recalled a saying attributed to St. Teresa, "The will of God will be done whether you like it or not, so you may as well make a virtue of necessity." But her heart did not want to make a virtue of necessity. It wanted . . . But it would never have what it wanted. The fault was

hers. This moment was too sacred for regrets; death must be met with courageous submission.

She got a drink for Leonard. She smoothed the bolster, she changed his sheet, and washed his face. Moving about doing small chores, she smiled at him, praying that her great weariness did not show in her face. The day was very warm, and June had brought flies as well as flowers. She fanned them away from Leonard, and tried to talk about little things. But it was a weak, pathetic effort, and she gave up.

It was nearly noon when Tidd returned with those for whom Leonard had sent him. The bustle caused by so many coming into the small room changed the atmosphere completely. Despite the sad occasion, Margaret found the presence of others stimulating. She embraced Mary, who looked at her with shocked surprise and said, "My poor dear, you look done to death."

At the word, Margaret stiffened, and bit her lip. Mary wanted to weep.

Linsey and Anketill remained in the background, uncomfortable and visibly moved. Thomas Greene stood by Leonard's bedside.

Leonard made an effort to sit up, but he was too weak and at a protest from Margaret he lay back again. He looked about him silently until his breath came more easily. Then he spoke:

"In the presence of this company," he said with deliberation, "I appoint you, Thomas Greene, to be Lieutenant General of this Province until His Lordship, my good brother, shall make his own selection."

He paused.

No one spoke or stirred.

Looking straight at Margaret, then, he went on, "And in the presence of these witnesses it is also to be known that I wish Mistress Margaret Brent to be sole guardian of my children."

Again he paused and looked about at everyone present.

"Are my wishes clear?"

Each one in turn gave him a verbal affirmative.

"Then listen well, again," he resumed, "I appoint you, Margaret Brent, my sole executrix: take all and pay all."

Again he paused.

Then he looked intently at each one in turn, and asked once more, "Are all my wishes clear?"

Each one answered, "Yes."

He seemed to relax for a moment and a smile played about his lips. Then he said, as if in benediction,

"God bless you all. God bless Maryland. Pray for me. And now, if you will, excuse me, I would be with Mistress Margaret alone."

Slowly the company left the room, Leonard nodding a farewell to each in much the same manner as though the visitors had casually dropped in to inquire about his recovery from a slight indisposition.

When they were alone again he turned to Margaret and started to speak, but she motioned him to silence.

"You have used all your strength. Rest, my dear. Rest."

"But the soldiers, Margaret, my army . . ."

"I know," Margaret reassured him, "they will be paid."

"My estate is not enough, you will have to realize a portion of Cecilius'. You must be his attorney until he appoints another. You must take my place and be his voice and vote in the Assembly."

"Yes, yes," quieted Margaret, then taking slight heed of his words, only praying that he would rest.

"And you, my Margaret, at long, long last, you will be the Lady of the Manor at St. Gabriel's."

"A lonely lady," choked Margaret with a bitterness which in the circumstances astonished her. Her eyes filled as she realized how she had spoken. Would she never learn submission? Would she never learn to put herself last instead of first? 'Dear God,' she prayed, 'these trials are to perfect us, yet I use them only for my greater imperfection!' She felt as though her breaking heart had fallen apart within her.

Her throat filled as she leaned to kiss Leonard in an effort to cover her bitterness, her lack of courage. The gesture was fatal. The tears rushed out, and she uttered a shuddering sob.

But Leonard took no notice. He was contemplating the present immediacy. He was about to meet God, face to face, to give an

accounting of his life. What had he to offer his Creator for his forty-one years probation on earth?

The hush of contemplation enveloped the room. Even Duke lay motionless on the fireless hearth. The sun had already set when a gentle knock was heard at the door. Softly Margaret opened it to a travel-stained, breathless Father Fisher.

"God be praised," she said, stepping aside to let him enter.

Leonard stirred. When he realized the identity of his guest, he said simply, "*Deo Gratias*, Father. This is more than I deserve."

Margaret remained with them only long enough first to pour the priest a refreshing cup of cold water; then to lay a clean white linen cloth on the cricket at the bedside, to bring a lighted candle, and give Leonard his small Crucifix from the table near at hand. She wondered why she had not done this sooner.

She managed a courageous smile as she leaned over and silently kissed her patient. Then, softly calling Duke to follow her, she left the room.

Stepping into the June twilight Margaret knew a pain too sharp for tears. Abjectly she leaned against the heavy door, absently aware of the transient beauty of the evening. The mellow light of the afterglow flooded the countryside with a placid air, as though to say, "Such is my pattern, it is perfect." Soon the opaque blackness of night would obscure everything from view. In the presence of nature's unchangeable routine Margaret began to realize the tranquility of utter abandonment. The twilight seemed to remind her:

*"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."*

The advent of Father Fisher, after she had given up hope of his coming, had bolstered her spirit. She contemplated the Master Designer of her life. The agenda He had drafted for her seemed endless. Leonard had entrusted her with challenging responsibilities which gave her a new humility.

How long she had spent in contemplation she did not con-

sider, when Father Fisher joined her. The expression on his face told her that Leonard was dead. They stepped from the low veranda and walked down to the river's edge, old Duke sorrowfully following.

Then suddenly, without warning, she sobbed aloud: "I 'll try, my God, I 'll try, but this parting hurts!"

The blessed relief of tears was hers at last.

PART III

THE LADY OF ST. GABRIEL'S MANOR

1647-1649

One

MARGARET'S first responsibility, naturally, had been to see that the deceased Governor of Maryland was buried with the honors and dignity befitting his station. Among other pressing details, this had meant that she must provide an ample repast for the funeral guests.

Father Fisher had sung the requiem at St. John's Manor where, due to the warm weather, the body had lain in state for twenty-four hours only. Then the pine casket had been closed and draped with a hearse cloth.

In spite of her great weariness and heavy heart, Margaret met the demands of the day following Leonard's death stoically, carefully weighing each decision, refusing to neglect the smallest detail. She rose to the occasion as a Brent, and more, as a practicing, living Catholic. All through the rebellion she had lived each day, as had been her custom, as a prayer, had examined her conscience each night, and fallen asleep breathing a sincere contrition. She was reconciled to this death of a loved one which God had permitted because her Faith gave her the sure knowledge and promise that Leonard lived, but now in a better realm. It was this Faith which gave her the courage to discharge her duties as he would have her do.

On the evening that Leonard died, Father Fisher had come to her when he could no longer help or comfort the man she loved. He had escorted her back to the White House, and at her own request had heard her confession, as well as those of the household. Early the next morning, in the privacy of Giles' home, he had offered the Holy Sacrifice, and distributed Communion to Margaret, Mary, Giles and Mary Kittamaquaand. These latter, at the summons of

Tidd, who also received Communion, had travelled the night from Kent to be present. Thus, Margaret was fortified by a recuperative power which the sympathy of friends alone could not provide.

As soon as the Provincial Court convened that day, William Bretton, Clerk, first inscribed upon the record this entry:

June 10. Mrs. Margarett Brent deposeth tbt the late Gouernor Leonard Calvert Esq being lying uppon his death bed, did by word of mouth on the Ninth of this month nominate Thomas Greene Esq Gouernor of the Prouince of Maryland.

"francis Anketill being prnt att the same time deposeth idem Mrs. Mary Brent deposeth idem. being prnt att the same time. James Linsey being allso prt deposeth idem . . .

On the twelfth, following the requiem and burial which was attended by all who could reach St. Maries in time, Margaret with the children, William and Anne, and their nurse moved in to St. Gabriel's Manor. Tidd was sent to her Virginia lands on Acquia Creek as steward there; Mary accompanied Giles and Mary Kitta-mquaand to Kent, from whence Giles returned almost immediately to be in St. Maries where the business of the Council kept him from his private pursuits.

It was almost a year later and Margaret was burning the candles way into the night, a lush extravagance, trying to reconcile Leonard's records; preparing her own final accounting of his estate which she must present on the morrow, June 6, 1648. She had received no less than three postponements: she could not well ask for another.

Such a year it had been!

The delay in accounting had not been entirely her fault.

When on the thirtieth of the previous June, the appraisers of the estate, Captain John Price, Mr. Nicholas Cawsin and Mr. Robert Percy, appointed by the Court, had filed their statement, one item thereon they had refused to value. This had been Margaret's greatest aid throughout the crowded months which followed. The appraisers had listed it as "3 books of Acct & diuerse bills not yett

perfected or cleared." She had consulted these three books so often that she almost knew their contents by heart.

Leonard had scarcely been laid in his grave when, as Margaret described them, the vultures began to hover over her own head. One after another, claims were pressed against his estate, the first emanating from no less a person than Edward Hill of Chelsea in Virginia, who made demands for his salary as Governor of the Province during the late occupation of Richard Ingle! Yet when at long last Leonard's estate was settled it comprised assets barely totalling one hundred ten pounds sterling.

With the persistence of the rising sun, the claims poured in upon Margaret. All were reduced to pounds of tobacco in cask. Cuthbert Fenwick demanded 11,030, Anthony Rawlins 360, Walter Beane 1328, Robert Sharpe 300 "for a musket wch the sd Leon: Caluert detayned from him att his goeing out of the prouince"; Captain John Price demanded 45,600 and 100 barrels of corn. She required all claims to be proved in open Court and so she won the enmity of many.

Settling the estate had consumed many hours of her time and had kept her nose in the "3 books of Acct & diuerse bills." Annoying and delaying to her final accounting as the many claims proved to be, Margaret took keen satisfaction in the fact that her perusal of these account books gave her grounds for innumerable counter-claims. More, they served as mute testimony to Leonard Calvert's boundless good nature and lavish generosity and explained why one of such position in the colony died a poor man.

Letting such blows fall where they might, Margaret, true to the Brent family motto, *Silento et Diligentia*, proceeded to collect further debts due Leonard which in his lifetime, content with little, he had not pressed.

In the first year following his demise she appreciably increased the value of his estate. No one escaped her assiduity. From Leonard's own brother, the Lord Baltimore, she recovered 18,548; and from Giles — a bitter pill for him — a 2800 debt of the Captain Cornwaleys for which Giles had given bond and which the Captain had not paid before leaving the Province. From Captain Henry Fleete, Margaret collected 5061, and among others, from John Lewger 1464.

It was late into the night as the lady of St. Gabriel's Manor listed her collections with proud satisfaction. When she concluded them, she turned to the list of her expenditures. By dawn the accounting must be complete.

Laying aside for the moment an inventory of Leonard's estate her hand paused as she noted how many of his effects she had secured with her own funds. That they were hers by the very conditions of his direction "take all and pay all" she well knew; but in those first days of her administration, such a fear possessed her that she would have to report in open court that he had died relatively a pauper, she did all in her power to accumulate funds for his credit.

For a total of 1628 pounds of tobacco in cask she had secured sundry items which she had checked off the inventory. She smiled as she noted a few of them; what use could they be to her? Both sentiment, curiosity and utility had governed her selection. In the order of importance which the appraisers had given them, these were the checked items:

13 Bookes — 160; 3 Lb. Sugar — 36; 6 Arms length Roanoke — 24; 2 bb. $\frac{1}{2}$ m Pinns — 4; A bone Crosse — 20; 3 small bitts of Syluer plate — 30; A syluver sack cup — 150; 2 z of Sweet head powder — 4; A gold Reliquary Case — 150; A kneeling desk & a picture of Paules — 50; 800 6d nayles, 500 double tens — 100; 1500 6d nayles lent; an old brasse kettle — 100; 5 old Pewter dishes 1 basin 5 plates — 150; 1 old Bed & bolster & 1 old greene Rug — 350; A Cutlex — 100; A Joynd Table, 2 chayres & a forme — 200.

But there: it was almost midnight; Margaret had still to list her expenditures.

She began; item one — Leonard would like this, she thought; it shows his estate capable of supporting its own expenses — since the 10th of June 1647 she had collected 27,160 pounds of tobacco in cask due him and had "layd it out att 20 percent." For this service she credited "my owne Sallary" with 5432. She had also retrieved a "siluer" cup belonging to him worth 150.

The next items, comprising the expenses of his illness and funeral,

gave her pause. Such extravagance they now seemed. Yet, for Leonard, she would not have had it otherwise. As she listed each one, her thoughts turned back to those long days and nights just a year ago, when she had been with him, doing all for his comfort yet knowing there could be no comfort for him in this world.

<i>By Dr. Waldrons fee</i>	1250
<i>By for phisick</i>	0309
<i>To Tho: Mathewes for Mithridate & wax-lights</i>	0110
<i>ffor his Hers-cloath</i>	0437
<i>ffor a Beefe, A ueale & other necessaries for his Buriall</i>	1200
<i>By payd for poultry & eggs for him</i>	0100
<i>By Prouision to carry Dr. Waldron downe to Virginia</i>	0080

Margaret sighed audibly.

She wanted to lay down her quill and go to bed. "Dear God, how weary I am," she whispered to the dark shadows all about her. But dipping the quill in the ink once more, she forced herself to the conclusion, writing now:

"By payed to the Soldiers out of his estate 9522."

The soldiers!

Margaret shuddered. What a trial they had been. There was no evidence in this account of how much she had paid them of her own funds — many times the "Sallary" she now deducted from the estate. And yet they were not satisfied. They were in an ugly mood. Only this day word had come that they threatened mutiny, and Thomas Greene had been disposed to let them do their worst. He refused to consider meeting their demands, pointing out they were in the majority wholly unjust. This Margaret admitted in a stormy session with the Governor, but she held appeasement was better than bloodshed.

After giving this final accounting at Court the following morning, she would go to St. Inigoes herself and talk to the men.

When the last item had been enumerated, she sanded the listing before her. Then pushing it one side she blew out the candles and was on the verge of rising to go to her room, when such a weariness overtook her, that "just for a moment" she rested her head on her folded arms on the table.

She knew nothing until next morning when the children wakened her.

Margaret expected her accounting to be the first item on the docket when Court opened next day. But she was disappointed. Henry Hooper ("chyrurgion") was already before the Court as she entered. He glared uncivilly at her, then continued his demand on His Lordship for 3379 pounds of tobacco and three barrels of corn as his due for salary, "surgery and physick to the soldiers" at St. Inigoes. His manner was so surly that he alienated the sympathy of the Court entirely, and prejudiced the jury which heard Margaret make answer that the sum of 1559 lbs. she knew to be due, but as for salary she knew of no claim under such a head.

The jury, thereupon, awarded Henry Hooper a mere 500 lbs and washed its hands of the case and plaintiff. This small victory cheered the heart of the Lord Baltimore's attorney.

When Margaret presented her own accounts to the Council she was most courteously treated. She was relieved that she had been able to discharge within the specified time her duties as executrix.

She dwelt seriously upon her duties in this capacity later in the day when, alone, she rode out towards St. Inigoes. All told she had given the garrison there thousands of pounds of tobacco, eleven head of cattle from His Lordship's stock and many barrels of corn.

Thomas Greene had been of no assistance: Margaret had had to assume full responsibility for the wages of Leonard's army. She had urged the Governor to levy an assessment against the people at least for the corn to feed the soldiers; but so great an uproar resulted in the Assembly (just as Leonard had predicted) that Greene refused to go further in the matter, informing Margaret that His Lordship had best meet his own obligations!

More than once Margaret lost patience with the Governor: why had Leonard made such a milk-blooded selection? On one occasion Greene himself without a by-your-leave had sold two of Celius' yearlings and paid a few soldiers with the proceeds. Margaret had met this highhandness by insisting before the Council,

that Governor or no, any disposition of His Lordship's property must have her ratification and confirmation. This move of hers had been the culmination of many altercations with the soft-spoken, timid, conciliatory Thomas Greene.

As she rode on towards St. Inigoes she could not forget that the garrison at Kent was also threatening desertion if their yearly salaries were not paid. They were six months overdue. Margaret had been holding off, desperately hoping that the people themselves would bear this burden which was for their own safety and protection. Because Leonard had established the garrison there, the month before his death, Governor Greene refused to present this responsibility to the Assembly for their consideration. Margaret's distemper with him rose high. Long since, by Leonard's instruction, she had demanded voice and vote in the Assembly as the Lord Baltimore's attorney. This had been swiftly denied her, even by many laughed out of Court. Whereupon in the name of the Lord Baltimore she had protested every further act of the Assembly.

But small consolation all this was to her now. She could see so clearly what should be done, where obligations lay and how they should in justice be met, that she impatiently yearned to do things properly; but because she was a woman she was impotent to act.

Riding along the open road she now noticed far ahead a large group of men coming towards St. Maries. Some were on foot, indeed the majority of them, and at their head were a few on horseback.

"The soldiers!" she thought to herself. "Mutiny!"

For an instant her heart stood still. Should she turn about and flee with a warning, or should she remain to meet the oncoming army? She drew rein, halting in the very middle of the roadway, blocking their path. The hot June sun beat down upon her. Perspiration rolled down her face.

"Good God!" she prayed, "what shall I do? Help me."

She waited. Her heart thumped; her knees trembled. And then, woman that she was, she wondered how she looked. She plucked at her dress here and there, setting it in order; she wiped her warm face, and ran her fingers through her cropped hair, patting it into place.

The men were close enough now for those whom she had met previously to be recognized. She was stunned to note Edward Hill in the lead.

"Dear Leonard," she cried under her breath. "Stand by. Stand by!"

Now, aware that she had no intention of moving, the marchers slackened their pace. Margaret wanted to laugh aloud as she noticed Edward Hill fall back, permitting Martin Kirk and the other two Lieutenants to take the lead. On they came, slowly, and Margaret did not budge. She had cast the die now. What would she do?

The army halted.

Kirk came forward and greeted Margaret in a most courtly manner. While gathering all her forces, she still could wonder how much courtesy Ingle's brigands would have displayed in similar circumstances.

"What is the trouble, Mr. Kirk?" she asked, returning his bow.

"The men are in a foul mood, madam," he informed her in a confidential tone, "they demand pay or pillage."

"And who, may I ask, has persuaded them that they will not receive their pay?" Margaret's tone was cool and aloof, but her heart thumped more violently than ever. She had taken pains, however, to raise her voice loud enough to reach the ears of Edward Hill, for his presence it seemed to her gave the answer to this sudden rising of the men.

Martin Kirk looked uncomfortable.

Margaret ignored him for the moment, and her eyes still on Hill, she called, "I say, Captain Hill, there, won't you come forward? You were leading this army when I first spied you. Why so modest now, Captain? Come, come forward and explain —"

"Yah!" cried a voice in the background, "tell her, Captain. Tell her our rights the same as you told us."

Sheepishly Hill came forward.

"An unruly lot," he said to Margaret, "coarse, vulgar, the scum of Virginia, I assure you, Mistress Brent."

Kirk looked at him in amazement, resentment flaring in his eyes.

"Mind your speech, sir!" he demanded. "It is you who have roused the men. Why run to cover with false accusations?"

Hill's cheeks crimsoned. "You liar!" he yelled.

"Gentlemen!" protested Margaret, "you disagree. Suppose we let the men speak for themselves."

Before either antagonist could restrain her, Margaret rode between them and into the midst of the men. Horse and man stepped aside to make room for her. The sullen expression on the many faces gave her grave alarm, but she made herself go on, apparently cool and self-possessed. She bowed cordially to those personally known to her. She drew rein and paused before George Manners.

"What wind blows here?" she asked him. Only six months previously she had paid him three thousand pounds of tobacco from her own funds. She knew nothing more was due him until January. She smiled at him, and giving him no chance to reply, moved on to meet Lieutenants Evans and Garbo.

"Greetings!" she smiled, "I know at least you gentlemen have no complaints: four thousand pounds and eight barrels of corn, wasn't it? And paid to you by me the fifth of last January, due again next January, and this only June. Will you be returned to Virginia, perhaps, before the winter?"

Her tone was one of frosty cordiality; her manner implied that their services were so insignificant as not to be required at all. With studied deliberation she gave them no opportunity to reply. Indeed she dreaded a reply from anyone present; could her usually ready wit make a fitting retort to whatever they might say? She walked her horse, leaving the Lieutenants behind her, and intently scanned the weather-beaten faces which were turned up to her.

"Hey, Mr. Hull!" she greeted cordially, trying to appear as one of them, "I hope those three barrels of corn you received were Maryland's best. And Thomas Allen! How's that young heifer I gave you last February? It was the best of His Lordship's stock. John Ward! Let me see, it was a brown cow, eh? Has she had any increase? Oh, hello, William Whitle — yours was a black cow if I remember rightly; and Barnaby Jackson, how are those three yearlings? I hope you gave Thomas Allen here the one that was due him!"

"Mr. Calvert promised us plenty of corn!" yelled a voice at the edge of the crowd.

"You are sure none has been stolen from you?" Margaret called

back. "Sent to Virginia, perhaps?" she added with a malicious glance in the direction of Captain Hill.

"He promised pillage!" called another voice.

"On certain conditions," Margaret retorted, "which are well known to you all."

There was a murmur among the gathering.

Martin Kirk rode up to Margaret with the intention of escorting her from the crowd. But Margaret would not notice him. The air grew tense, and she realized that she must stay the men now, or expect the threatened mutiny. Her own safety gave her slight concern; she wanted to avoid more bloodshed in the colony. How could she? She, only a woman, fit to be given overwhelming responsibilities, yet denied the privileges which should accompany them. Deliberately she scanned the dark faces all about her, and then:

"Gentlemen," she began, marveling that her voice did not quaver, and aware that her hands felt as cold as stone, "when Mr. Calvert brought you to Maryland he promised pillage if you met resistance. You have not. You have been welcomed, garrisoned and provisioned from his own estate. This he pledged to you, and from that of His Lordship too, so far as was needed for your wages. These were to be paid however each of you might choose. You have permitted yourselves to be imposed upon, if now you would take by force what is recognized as due to you after a proper accounting."

She paused. "What next, what next," she asked herself.

"From the bounty of this colony which owes its present peace to your presence and your kind deliverance from a cruel despot," she resumed, "you have been given corn, cattle and tobacco. You are aware since the decease of Governor Calvert, I, Margaret Brent, have exercised power of attorney over his and the Lord Baltimore's estates. If then you have any cause for dissatisfaction, gentlemen, it is with me, not with the people of Maryland. It would not be the desire nor the design of either the late lamented Mr. Calvert or his brother in England that this valiant army which rescued Maryland from trial and tragedy should want for any necessary, nor any man for his just due. But I beg you take heed, for that which

you lack, I alone am to blame; for that which is due you I, alone, am responsible. Surely you gallant men, one hundred strong, would not rise with force against one woman?" Margaret sucked in her breath as she played this card: never before had she asked quarter on the ground of her sex.

"I beg, therefore," she went on, "present your claims in an orderly fashion, becoming Englishmen of substance, and they will be paid — every one. Do not let anyone persuade you that by disturbing the present peace of this colony you will serve justice. You have only to make your claims known to me. Give no heed to the jealous advice of deposed leaders," she went on, deliberately taking the time to search out Edward Hill and fasten her gaze upon him. The byplay was not lost on the men to whom she spoke.

"As His Lordship's attorney," she continued then, "I, alone, in this whole colony, am empowered to promise you full satisfaction of your just claims, and that I hereby do upon my honor as a daughter first of Holy Church, second of the English peerage."

"The peerage is dead!" howled a voice.

"The honor of the peerage is immortal," retaliated Margaret astounded at her dramatics. "Let Mr. Kirk, here, be your intermediary," she rushed on before another heckler would taunt her, "I implore you, as fair and just men, give my word an opportunity of fulfillment before the blood of Englishmen again seeps into the soil of Maryland. I warn you, gentlemen, there will be blood if you persist in your intentions. The military genius of my brother, Captain Giles Brent, is well known to you. It is he who will lead our resistance. Let no one tell you we are not armed. Armed for war and armed for peace. Take your choice. For peace we have land for the asking. Good Englishmen are welcomed in Maryland. But remember, if you choose rebellion, you choose to shed the blood of Englishmen, because one Englishwoman, myself, has been negligent in her duty towards you; nor has that been willful negligence. Think you in one woman's head may be carried all your accounts? Does Captain Hill, here, have all your accounts in his head? Obviously not; then why permit him to persuade you to bloodshed when you may have peace and justice?"

Margaret stopped. She was talked out. Phrases whirled in

her head, but she would not utter them. She had swallowed sufficient humble pie for one day, but the price was cheap if she had dissuaded this army from its bloody intent.

Had she? No voice was raised now to heckle her. She wanted to go home. Dared she move? Would these men take her prisoner, hold her as hostage, perhaps, until their demands were met?

She would know in a moment. Her numb hands pulled the reins. She turned her horse about. Martin Kirk silently moved to her side. The Lieutenants Evans and Garbo also drew up to her. Only the disgruntled Hill held back. Margaret moved forward with her voluntary escort. Slightly beyond the gathering, the three men bowed a farewell and then turned about to rejoin their army.

She felt this pantomime to be ominous. If only one of them had spoken. Her dignity would not permit her to turn in the saddle and thus to note that the three men rode through the infantrymen, and proceeded on to St. Inigoes.

On, on she went. Finally she realized she was not being followed; at least not at close range. Then she slumped in her saddle, her whole body limp and weak. She did not know what she had accomplished, only that she had been too long exposed to the hot sun and that her head ached violently.

Two

SHE reached St. Gabriel's in the early evening. The children had already had their supper and were playing on the terrace with Duke, now aged but trying his best to be frolicsome. Deane, the English nurse, stood by keeping a careful eye on her charges. As Margaret dismounted, assisted by Linsay, Leonard's steward whom she had retained, she noticed little Anne had a bandage about her wrist.

"My pet," she cried, as the children ran to her, "what has happened to my pet?"

"A mere scratch, mam, I promise you," said Deane, "the young lady wished a bandage for no more than adornment!"

Margaret hugged the child to her. She was so much like her mother at the same age. Often memory took Margaret back through the years and over the sea as she played with this little girl. As clearly as though it were but yesterday she recalled her own insistence then of almost full charge of her baby sister. If Anne had to leave them, this small prototype was a satisfying consolation. Now Margaret looked at young William with mock severity, and asked,

"Young man, have you been tormenting your sister again, and playing roughly with her?"

"Oh, no, Auntie, no, no. It is she who has been tormenting me."

"I see," replied Margaret with playful sympathy in her tone.

Then noticing that Linsay was still standing by, she looked at him questioningly.

"A note, mam," he said now, advancing towards her with the small message. "Mr. Bretton left this but an hour ago."

Margaret took the message eagerly. Mr. Bretton had promised to send her word when Peter Knight reached St. Maries so that she could immediately appear to press her suit against him.

After joining Clayborne in the plunder of Kent Fort Manor during Ingle's occupation, Peter Knight had confiscated all the profits from her mill which he operated, and had sold, slaughtered or given away all of her cattle. He had fired the outbuildings; had sold much of her plantation equipment including plough gears which at some pains and expense Margaret had imported from England. When Leonard recaptured Kent, Knight had absconded with all the iron work of the mill plus the hinges and locks from the doors of the manor house. The doors themselves he had burned and had taken pains to otherwise deface.

Mary was now in residence at Kent and Giles had been up many times to supervise reconstruction and take a complete inventory of the damages. It was from this information that in her bill of particulars, Margaret had listed the amount of each separate claim, and was surprised herself when the grand total amounted to 30,600 pounds of tobacco in cask.

Time and again Peter Knight had been summoned to answer her charges, but had stayed away due to sickness and sundry excuses; so that at last Margaret had obtained a warrant for him and Mr. Bretton had promised to advise her the moment the man was apprehended and taken into custody.

Pausing before opening Mr. Bretton's message, Margaret called to Linsay, now on his way to the stables.

"Linsay, would you know the whereabouts of Captain Brent?"

"He is here, mam, waiting his supper for you to join him."

She started towards the house then, but the children ran after her and tugged at her skirts.

"A story, Auntie, a story, please," begged young William.

"Oh, my pets, now let Auntie have her supper, please?"

"When we go to bed then?" urged William who seemed to have inherited his father's ability to wait with patience for what he wanted.

"Yes, when we go to bed?" echoed Anne.

"That is a promise," Margaret answered, though there was a trace of reluctance in her voice which she hoped they would not

notice. She was so tired this evening. Kissing them both, she resumed her way to the house.

And as she did so, she opened Mr. Bretton's note.
She stood still in the path as she read it.

To Mrs. Margaret Brent, atty for His Lorsp., Madam, I take occasion to remind you of my salary 1500 lbs. Tob. in cask and 3 bb. corn due January last from His Lorsp. excess.

W^m Bretton, Clerk.

Margaret sighed. Only another claim, and Peter Knight was still at large.

And then her temper rose.

"Excess!" she exclaimed to herself. "God have mercy. How am I to know all these debts with no records for guidance? 'Excess.' Hah! Likely I will have to dip into my own from Virginia."

She found Giles in the living room absorbed in one of Leonard's thirteen books, a treatise by William Harvey who had discovered the circulation of the blood. By his side lay a small volume of the religious poetry of Giles Fletcher. Leonard's library was sizeable and comprehensive.

Looking up as Margaret entered, Giles dropped the book to his knee. But one glimpse of his sister, and he was on his feet coming towards her.

"You 're fagged," he said, putting an arm about her and leading her to a chair. Then he brought her a cup of cool water.

"Where have you been?" he demanded. "I 've never seen you look worse."

"Dear, comforting Giles," said Margaret, as she handed the cup back to him.

"You must give up this business, Margaret, else you, too, will fill an early grave."

She looked at him wearily.

"Already I feel I have lived too long," she said.

"Other spinsters of your vintage might say that with truth," Giles commented, "but not you, Margaret. You are the strongest spoke in the wheel of our fortune."

Margaret looked at him with marked surprise. Rarely did Giles show affection; even more rarely did he dispense compliments. His words revived her slightly, but then impulsively she asked:

"What ails you, Giles, have you a claim for settlement, too?"

He looked at her at once both puzzled and hurt; and as usual Margaret immediately regretted her hasty speech but found it hard to apologize.

"You *are* fagged," Giles told her with much charity, "what have you been up to?"

Margaret leaned back in the stiff wooden chair and running her hand through her hair, she began a relation of the event of the afternoon. Giles listened with shocked and rapt attention. When she had finished, he got up and began pacing the room.

"Good gracious," Margaret complained, her nerves on edge, "sit down and control your agitation."

Giles stopped at a window. He stood with his back towards her.

"You need not answer if you prefer not," he said, "but I am curious. What strange devotion did you have for Leonard that you thus expose yourself now to danger and censure for his sake?"

"He appointed me . . ."

But Giles cut her off.

"The whole colony knows that," he said tersely. "But why? Why did he repose more trust and confidence in you than in any man among us?"

Margaret sighed.

With an effort she rose and slowly crossed the room to join her brother. It was twilight now.

"We were to be married," she said simply.

Giles looked at her curiously for an instant. Then for the second time that evening he put his arm around her affectionately.

"That explains it all," he said. "I did not know. Love permits no limit to sacrifice."

Directly after their simple supper, Giles ordered Margaret off to bed.

"But the children," she protested, "I promised them a story."

"Let me fill that promise," said Giles. "How about an *Aesop's Fable*?"

Margaret was too tired to resist. She had worked almost through the previous night, and indeed, not going to her bed at all had had no proper rest. This had been a hard day.

"Promise," she implored him, "you'll give them no blood and thunder tale."

"I promise," said Giles with mock solemnity. "I shall spin a yarn of sugar and honey."

"A likely promise," said Margaret with a wry smile.

And then she betook herself to bed and slumber.

Next morning when she awoke, she felt as tired as when she had retired. She had been too weary for a wholly restful sleep. She had a lingering headache, but her first recollection was that today a session of Court Baron would be held at St. Gabriel's. As lady of the manor she would have to preside. It was with such reluctance that she made herself get up and dress that she offered this act as a mortification of the flesh — her morning prayer.

This would be the first Court Baron held at the manor since Leonard's death.

At breakfast Linsay presented a note which he told her had been sent by special messenger from St. Inigoes.

"The soldier says an answer is required, mam," he informed her, and then retreated a respectful distance while she examined the contents of the message.

If Giles were only here! He had returned to Kent the evening before, after telling the children the story. A tired smile broke over her lips. Her eyes lighted and she sighed as though from great relief.

"Tell the messenger," she advised Linsay, "that Mr. Kirk's gracious wish may be realized this very day. Explain that we are holding Court this morning, and say Mr. Kirk may then make his wishes publicly known and receive that for which he here petitions."

And again, as Linsay left, Margaret wished Giles might be present to witness this little victory. The intention of Martin Kirk refreshed her more than her night's sleep.

In his note Kirk had asked for a copyhold at St. Gabriel's.

"Not only for my own advantage and profit," he had written, "but also as evidence to the men of the garrison of my loyalty to

you, milady, His Lordship's Attorney. If I may be permitted thus openly to show forth a proper example, it may benefit the peace of this colony to the extent by which it inspires others of the garrison to a similar course."

At ten o'clock sharp the hall of St. Gabriel's having been cleared of all surplus furnishings, Linsay as steward of the manor, called for silence from the assembled freemen tenants as Margaret, Lady of St. Gabriel's, made her entrance.

When she had seated herself before the small council table, and her steward had taken his position at her right, though standing, she formally opened this session of Court Baron by rapping for order.

There were various and many small routine matters for Margaret to pass upon, and she grew impatient at the time they consumed. It was nearly mid-day, before she called for a short recess, during which time she conferred with her steward.

Many tenements had fallen to the manor when their owners, being disaffected persons, had refused the oath of fealty to the Lord Baltimore which Leonard required when he regained St. Maries. These persons had fled to Appamatucks or Chickacoan in Northumberland County, Virginia, directly opposite St. Maries.

Now Margaret rapped for order again bringing the recess to a close, and Linsay called Kirk's name. As he came forward, Margaret was pleased to note his evident sincerity, for he left behind a handful of the soldiers from the Fort.

Linsay, aware of Kirk's intention, advanced to him as he came to a standstill before Margaret's table. In his hand, the steward held a long, stripped branch of underbrush. Kirk readily took the other end of the branch. The assemblage quieted of its own accord, always interested in this manorial custom for the transfer of land.

Then Linsay spoke:

"The Lady of the Manor by me the Steward doth hereby deliver you seizn by the rod and admit you as tenant on the premises."

Still holding his end of the rod, Kirk turned to Margaret, and bowing low, swore fealty to her:

"Hear you, milady, that I, Martin Kirk, shall be to you both true and faithful and shall owe my fidelity to you for the land I hold of you and lawfully shall do and perform such customs and

services as my duty is to you at the term assigned, so help me God and all His Saints."

Then before the Court and freemen of the manor, Linsay broke the rod over his knee, giving half to Kirk and retaining the other half as evidence among the manorial records of Kirk's thirty-two acre copyhold.

Three

EVER since June, Margaret had tried to salvage more time from her busy life for the children, whom she dearly loved, and for her own interests and inclinations. One of these was to rest and relax. She had put in a hard year since Leonard's death, and her very bones felt weary.

Early in July she went to Kent Fort Manor to spend some time there with Mary. She was both pleased and somehow pained to note how completely happy Mary was there, without her. She seemed to thrive on this voluntary separation, which, at the time had been a great shock to Margaret.

Mary had moved to Kent the previous summer when, after Leonard's death, Margaret had established herself at St. Gabriel's.

"But you must come with me," Margaret had insisted. "We have always been together, Mary. I could not bear separation."

To Margaret's utter astonishment Mary had received that statement with a torrent of words which left Margaret defenseless.

"There was a time when that would have been true," Mary had told her, her eyes flashing and her fingers nervously toying with the embroidery in her lap. "But that time has past," she affirmed. "For five long years you have never given a thought to our separation if there was something which interested you more. You have grown away from me, Margaret. First, in the winter of '42 you left me to go to Kent; you refused to re-deed the land to Giles. You have always had an acquisitive streak like his although you would not admit it. And another thing," Mary went on, her face flushed and her words rapidly tumbling out on top of each other, "you absorbed my company for years and you would not share it. How you scoffed and scolded over the one gentleman

who showed me some small attention here! Then during the occupation, night after night, you went abroad, leaving me alone in the White House with only a servant and a horse — one night, before you went to Virginia, even the servant was gone too — fixing the boat for your trip."

Mary paused for breath, Margaret was too stunned to speak.

"You have become increasingly independent of me, my sister," Mary resumed. "Since you were seventeen I have lived my life for you. I have made what you wanted my first intention. Now I am going to live my life for myself! I love you dearly — I always shall. You are to come and see me, but, I — well, Margaret, I want to be a person, not 'Margaret Brent's sister, Mary,' I want to be *Mary Brent*! I was born Mary Brent, now"

At last she stopped, breathless and confused. For all of her fire, she anxiously scanned Margaret's face for her reaction. She feared to hear Margaret speak, yet knew an agony of waiting until she did.

For her part, Margaret was astonished, first at Mary's unusual outburst and second at a sudden and overwhelming realization of her own selfishness. She had never before considered that Mary had given her constant companionship, to which she had been indifferent in the face of her new interest in Maryland. For the time being her heart was still numb over Leonard's death so that it was not as sensitive to this new pain as it would be later when time healed the deep wound and prolonged the separation from her sister.

But when Mary had ceased speaking and Margaret saw her anxious face peering at her, knowing a great sense of shame and humility, she had quietly said, "I believe you are justified, dear. Independence is a precious possession; an immense freedom."

It was, indeed, a changed Mary whom Margaret now visited at Kent in the June of '48. She was as venturesome, at times even as stormy, as her brother and sister had always been. Objectively Margaret enjoyed this change which she had never presumed possible.

Mary had entertained and been entertained; she had re-enacted her role of "angel of mercy" which she had inherited from Eleanor Hawley. She was not intimidated by the fact that life on Kent

was always subject to potential danger due to its proximity to the unsettled frontier. At St. Maries this sister had been content to leave "public life" to Margaret, but now in emulation of her, perhaps, Mary Brent was often present at Court collecting debts and justice for her friends and herself.

Margaret left Kent Fort Manor in late September and went to visit Giles and his wife at "Retirement" in Virginia, some fifty to sixty miles by crow flight north and west of St. Maries. Naturally she had the children with her. Never were two small children so like their father and mother. William had Leonard's deep and patient eyes, and his inborn sense of justice; Anne had all the sparkle, wit and impishness of her mother.

The land which Giles had given Margaret lay along Aquia Creek, and here, during the fall, Margaret had Tidd supervise the building of a small retreat which she called "Peace." Relaxing here, she grew to love this higher country, the cordiality of their neighbors, who, though vast acreages separated them, were neighbors none the less. She dreamed of one day enlarging "Peace," perhaps even rebuilding the Freehold here; if only Mary would rejoin her and be the docile, sweet, even timid soul to whom she was accustomed. But the dreams always ended abruptly. As long as Catholic priests could not move openly in Virginia Margaret knew she could never feel at home here where papists were anathema.

Now she often reviewed in her mind her fulfillment of the responsibilities Leonard had bequeathed her, trying to discover if she had left anything undone.

After the Kirk appearance at Court Baron she had given deserted tenements to many of the soldiers, thus relieving their restlessness which had threatened disorder. Cecilius, always anxious to populate his colony, should be pleased that she had added so many new subjects. To the best of her knowledge she had recovered all of Cecilius' livestock and other moveable property which had been dispersed during Ingle's occupation. She had ejected the squatters from all his manors. She had collected all outstanding debts due both Leonard and the Lord Baltimore. With the proviso that ultimately they would revert to Leonard's children, she had arranged for the rents and profits from Leonard's other two manors to go temporarily to Cecilius whose funds were dangerously low.

So Margaret passed the summer months, the fall and early winter. She spent the Nativity at "Peace," and when in mid-December King Charles became a prisoner at St. James she, like the other colonists, was blissfully unaware of it.

It was almost the end of January when she return to St. Gabriel's which she had left the previous June. Giles came with her, having some business about the White House and its acres. The day was Tuesday, January 30th, 1648. Neither of them could know that morning, as they resumed their roles at St. Maries, that across the sea, in London, at Whitehall, King Charles I, at twelve noon, had lost his head to Cromwell's executioners.

Giles assisted Margaret and the children, and was about to leave the manor then, to be about his business, when Linsay appeared with an official looking letter in his hand. He explained it had lain here since the Nativity, as he did not know when she would return.

Margaret took it, and thanked him. Glancing over the outside, she exclaimed, happily, "Why, Giles, this is from Cecilius! Stay. I will read it to you."

As she drew a chair near the window, and opened the letter she said to her brother, "This is the first word I have had from Cecilius since Leonard died. High time, eh?"

Giles nodded.

"Indeed!" he snorted, "high time and beyond time. Read it."

Cecilius, Absolute Lord and Proprietary of the Province of Maryland and Avalon, Lord Baron of Baltimore &c: to Mrs. Margaret Brent, Gent., residing without our pleasure at St. Gabriel's Manor in our said Province of Marieland:

On this 15th day of August in the 17th year of our Dominion over the said Province of Marieland, Anno Dom 1648 we are constrained to denounce your sundry breaches of conduct scarcely becoming one of your fair sex, nor a daughter of the peerage: these indiscretions have brought a hornet's nest about our ears by receipt of divers epistles from our subjects there who are of equal substance in birth and station with the family of the late lamented Lord of Stoke and Admington, the esteemed Sir Richard Brent.

It is a full decade since last we saw you, and then reposing full

trust in your good taste having cause for a respectful regard of your womanliness and charm, we on that occasion of happy though now clouded memory, sent you out to our Province with special dispensations in the matter of grants of land. But now steeped to the lips in misery by civil strife in this realm and the recent rebellion in our said Province of Marieland, as well as the dire loss of our well beloved brother Leonard Calvert, it would seem yet our cup of gall were not full to the brim but we must most painfully learn of your scandalous, even avaricious conduct there in your presumptuous management of our own affairs by no other direction than that of a sick and suffering man. Our late lamented good brother on his deathbed was so tormented by pain and suffering that in a delirium he bestowed honors upon you which your modesty does not reject and your greed grasps tenaciously. Thus your pugnacious, self-seeking person with no regard for the fitness of the occasion assumes the most grave responsibilities. By the aforesaid divers complaints sent us from there, such reception of an appointment made in pain now shows an indignity, an affront, an outrage to my good brother's otherwise sacred memory, not to mention his sane and sound judgment on all occasions when, in health, he acted as my Lieutenant General of Marieland.

Your vexatious administration, from which no one could divert you, but widens the breach between two old families long tied by friendship, and now, alas, by blood, which your ambitious brother opened by his treatment of our well-affected and trusted Secretary John Lewger, and the mortification brought upon our Province and our family by his degrading union in matrimony with one of the savages there.

By sundry communications received by us from such respected and trusted persons as Sir Thomas Gerard, Bart., Captain Henry Fleet, our well beloved Secretary John Lewger, Captain John Price and our Lieutenant General there, Thomas Greene, we are now aware that for six years past you have appeared for yourself and others, even your brothers using you as a screen, and our sheriff of St. Maries, Edward Parker, upwards of one hundred times as a litigant in our Provincial Court. Further at these suits at law for the recovery of presumed debts due you and divers persons represented by you, which with a fiend's cleverness you have in all

instances persuaded the Court to be bona fide, with exception so rare as to go unmentioned, you have come off victorious. As a result thereof, we are now informed, you have mostly taken up land as satisfaction in lieu of the regular currency there prevailing, i.e.: tobacco, or tobacco in cask; so that there is grave danger, we are informed, that the family of Brent will or mayhap now has title to more of Marieland than the rightful Proprietary thereof, the Lord Baron of Baltimore.

More: intelligence is delivered to us that you, acting as our attorney there, have given your assent that rents of certain tenements in my manor in east St. Maries may be demanded and received by Mr. Thomas Copely "until final determination of the difference now depending between the Right Honorable the Lord Proprietor and the said Mr. Copely concerning the said rents and tenements or further order from the said Lord Proprietor." Your injudicious meddling here may well resolve to the utter desertion of our Province by the Jesuits which is not our wish nor desire. It is well understood that we wish the mission there to sustain itself by diligence in agriculture and voluntary means.

Further, we are inflicted by your indelicacy in demanding a voice and vote in our Assembly there on our behalf. This mortification might well be brought upon us by the spouse of a fishmonger; that one of your high birth should so publicly forget her position gives us embarrassment and great vexation of spirit.

Our exasperation with your officious, unwomanly meddling with our affairs not of your concern is more provoked, aggravated and irritated by your willful, careless, loose, unreasonable depletion of our stock of cattle there, to satisfy favorites of yours among the rough army imported from Virginia. Among these you have dispensed our stock indiscriminately.

More and a final annoyance to us is evidence of your lust for land. Not content, on the slightest pretext yet with apparent legal sanction, to acquire thousands of acres in our Province there, we are informed that you and your brother Giles, enjoying the favor of Sir. William Berkeley, Governor of Virginia, now hold title to ten thousand acres in Virginia, whereon Giles Brent has already erected a manor "Retirement" for the seclusion of his savage wife.

Indeed we are persuaded the retirement of all the Brents from

our Province would be conducive to domestic peace therein and at this time we are transmitting to our well beloved Thomas Greene expressions of our discomposure over the machinations of our illegally appointed, indiscreet attorney and instructing that he discharge her by every legal means at his command; that if she resist he is to bring out force to dislodge her.

In company with this communication we forward this day a commission to our well affected friend, William Stone, Esq., bearing date 6th August, empowering him to act as our Lieutenant General and attorney in Marieland. This friend, not grasping for land for himself, has induced five hundred souls of British and Irish descent to settle in Marieland.

You will henceforth, therefore, from this moment forward, refrain from meddling in my affairs there and if God give you the grace, may you likewise offer no further scandal to your sex or the Colony. Given at Bath this 15th day of August, Anno Dom 1648.

C. Calvert.

Four

FOR once even the quick tempered Giles had been too astounded to break in upon Margaret who in a low, hesitant voice had read Cecilius' diatribe through to the end. When she concluded, as though utterly exhausted by a gruelling physical ordeal, she dropped her hands to her lap and her relaxed fingers let the abusive communication slide unnoticed to the floor.

A vibrant, heavy silence prevailed.

Margaret was dumbfounded. Her very soul ached as though it had been torn on the rack, bruised, beaten, belabored. For his part Giles knew such a surge of rage that for the nonce he literally could not speak; his throat was constricted with fury.

Margaret was the first to recover sufficiently to break the silence.

"Mrs. Francis White once appeared in court with power of attorney for Alex Pulton," she observed. But her voice trailed off as though, perhaps, this fact was irrelevant to the case in point.

"And likewise Mrs. Belcher at Kent," Giles spoke at last though his voice hissed through his teeth in a hoarse whisper.

He got up then, and heavily stomped to the cupboard. There he poured a cup of Madeira for himself and another for Margaret.

"This is the end," he said bluntly as he handed it to her.

"Oh no," she contradicted, "there is yet another hogshead in the wine cellar."

Giles looked at her absently.

Taking the empty cup which presently she handed him, he replaced it together with his own on the cupboard shelf, and saying nothing he walked over to a window. For a long time he looked out on Maryland.

Finally he returned to Margaret.

"This is the end of the Brents in Maryland," he now enlarged

his previous statement. "The end for Margaret and Giles, Mary may do as she wishes. You must remain here no longer, nor will I."

Margaret looked at him blankly. To her his words sounded far off. She was still dazed and stunned by Cecilius' vituperative letter. Giles realized he had never seen her valiant spirit so wholly crushed, nor, he recognized too, had he ever loved this often exasperating sister more deeply than he did now. He wanted to caress her in sympathy, but she seemed of a sudden so fragile he dared not.

At last he exploded.

"Cecilius has no perspective," he stormed, his voice a pitch above normal.

"... or charity," Margaret cut in.

"And respect for womankind," Giles went on. "By all that is holy I should like to force his lips to your boots. When I think of the trials you have undergone to protect his interests; the dangers to which you have willingly exposed yourself and over my most vehement protests; the increase you have brought to his holdings here, your recovery of his cattle, your generous deeding of Leonard's rents over to him from the manors of Trinity and St. Michael's which, by Leonard's will, were all yours; when I hear his accusations against your use of power whereas it would have been to his greater advantage and profit had Leonard nominated you Governor and Greene executor. . . ."

"Giles!" Margaret remonstrated, "not a woman governor!"

"Better by far than dilly-dally Greene, and you know it. Greene is ever the appeaser, never firm, ever waiting for matters to resolve themselves, never taking the initiative. . . ."

"Matters have a way of resolving themselves," said Margaret wearily.

Giles looked at her keenly.

"You prefer to remain here, *now?*"

She looked up at him. For all the rest she had taken during the past seven months, she was as weary now as she had been the evening after she had faced the mutinous soldiers.

"I am forty-seven years old," she said with a deep sigh. "All my life I have sought peace. Ten years ago I came out to Mary-

land with you for that purpose. For how brief a time I knew Utopia! I may have asked too much, Giles. I will not quarrel now with Cecilius if for no other reason than my love for his brother. — Dear Leonard! if only I had not been so stubborn, so independent! — Now for many years Maryland has given me no peace; but Giles, if I remove to Virginia, think you there, where papists are proscribed, I may have peace of conscience?"

"Um," muttered the practical Giles into his beard. "You must pick and choose. Do you want the moon?"

Margaret did not answer.

"Your contentment," he went on, now placing his hand on her thin shoulder, "must lie wholly in your peace of soul. You have yourself guessed that this is the most we may expect of this strife torn world. No man can take that from you, for it comes from God; it is His divine gift of Faith. It is our only consolation in this vale of tears, our only peace."

Margaret had never suspected Giles to have a philosophical streak in him. She looked at him affectionately, and rested her cheek against his hand.

"If only Cecilius could understand," she said, "how even the sincere Protestants here love our Jesuits."

Giles thought the observation irrelevant.

"Umph!" he snorted. "If only His Autocratic Lordship could understand many things: our weariness of his lengthy oaths by which we are sworn into office, our resentment of the laws he would force upon us which are so wholly inapplicable to conditions here. He lives in another world; a troubled world, true. If only he could understand his own relative impoverishment since the Ingle occupation, and that your own resources in Virginia have paid and provisioned his soldiers. . . ."

"Sh!" commanded Margaret. "Let me hold peace. Let me forget his ingratitude, his abuse, his calumny. Giles, I do declare to you, my brother, if I allow myself to dwell upon the event of this day, not even in Virginia shall I know the one imponderable peace."

Giles looked at her in amazement.

His face flushed and his voice evidenced a stirring emotion as he said, "As you will, my sister. Hold your peace."

He paused. Stooping down he retrieved Cecilius Calvert's letter to his sister which he deliberately folded and tucked in his waist-coat.

"For myself," he concluded, "as long as God gives me to live, I shall never forget."

"It will be hard," Margaret agreed. Her voice was flat, lifeless.

"And now?" asked Giles.

Margaret stood up, facing the hearth with her back to him. She pressed the fingers of both hands against her temples as though her head were throbbing. She closed her eyes.

"I wish," she said, "you would please send word to Father Fisher. I want to see him."

"I will go for him at once," replied Giles. "I understand."

"You are a good brother, Giles," Margaret told him as he paused only long enough to kiss her.

When she was alone Margaret released the hot tears which had been flooding her closed eyes. Never had she felt so hurt, so tired, so crushed. "Whatever came over you, Cecilius, that you could speak so cruelly to me?" she begged aloud as though the Lord Baltimore were before her in person. "I have given the best I had to Maryland, and my whole loyalty, always to you. Oh! Cecilius!"

But when Father Fisher came to her a few hours later he found her dry-eyed. He was quick to note the pain in those eyes, however, and the drawn tragic expression of her face. Sitting there before her fire, a knitted shawl gathered closely about her, her feet raised from the cold floor on a small cricket, Father Fisher recalled her scintillating spirit of long ago when he had sought a night's refuge at Larke Stoke. Now Margaret looked like a discouraged and hopeless old woman.

She forced a smile to greet him.

"His Lordship has . . ." she began.

"I know," he interrupted her, taking a seat at the opposite side of the hearth. "Giles asked me to read the letter."

"What do you think, Father? What shall I . . ."

"I think it is very harsh, my child, and wholly unjust."

Margaret searched his face for a moment, seeking she knew not what unless it be his whole sympathy for what she had to ask.

"I want to leave Maryland," she announced crisply.

"I can hardly blame you," replied Father Fisher mildly, "but it is not like you to run away, Margaret."

"Run away?" Margaret was shocked. "But, Father, how can I now remain?"

"Perhaps you cannot," he said gently, "but . . ."

"I'm sorry," Margaret apologized as she cut him off, "I find it hard to express myself. You know I can go to Virginia. I have a small retreat there. . . ."

"Which you have named well," encouraged the priest, smiling at her.

"That remains to be proved," countered Margaret. "Will I find peace in Virginia without . . .?" She hesitated, fearing a negative reply.

"Go on, my child," urged Father Fisher.

". . . without the Mass?" concluded Margaret quickly.

Father Fisher looked at her solemnly.

"What makes you feel you will have the Mass here?" he asked her.

"Here?" Margaret was surprised. "But we have it here, Father. I am afraid I do not understand."

"We have it for the moment, after a long lapse," he explained, "but in days as uncertain as these who knows for how long? There is no 'religious freedom' in these colonies,' Margaret. Save for a brief time in Maryland, 'religious freedom' has never been known to exist in any English colony planted here." The priest paused for a moment fastening his eyes upon Margaret's. "In Virginia," he resumed slowly, "the Brents would be a minority — like the first Apostles," he concluded meaningfully.

"Who met hostility in every city and hamlet," added Margaret, a new animation slowly coloring her voice as she recognized a challenge. "And yet the first Apostles spread the Gospel far and wide."

"With the aid of the Holy Ghost," reminded Father Fisher.

Margaret looked at him. Her eyes spoke a discouragement as sudden as had been her perception of his challenge. He was disturbed. He had intended his words to be helpful.

"And the Holy Ghost will remain with you, my child, at your

invitation," he said now, quickly endeavoring to repair any misunderstanding Margaret might have. "Do you know your land in Virginia is already consecrated by the blood of Christian martyrs?"

"My land? No, Father, how?"

"You recall that the Spanish Franciscan, Father Segura, journeyed to Maryland and Virginia long before the English came here?"

"Yes," acknowledged Margaret, "I have heard it related. It was in 1570 or '71."

"Quite right," replied Father Fisher, "and he and his companions were slain by the natives whom they had come to serve. They had erected a small altar in the woods, remember, where their guide had deserted them? It was while offering the Holy Sacrifice that the savages stole upon them and slew them."

"Yes," replied Margaret, "I recall the details distinctly. But do you mean to say . . ."

"I mean to say," Father Fisher picked her up, "that this martyrdom occurred on Aquia Creek where now the Mistress Brent has established 'Peace.' See, now, how well chosen is the name!"

"Father!" exclaimed Margaret, rising to her feet and crossing the hearth to sit next to him. "Is this really true? Oh!"

"Really true," smiled the priest, "it is recorded now as an historical fact. So now, I ask you, Margaret, on what better ground might Catholicism be introduced into Virginia; and by what more fitting souls than the Brents who have suffered so much for our Holy Faith? *Si Deus nobiscum, quis contra nos?*"

"You are an inspiration!" Margaret almost shouted so great was her relief, so keen her new enthusiasm.

Father Fisher smiled. This was better. Now the years dropped from Margaret and she more nearly resembled herself as he knew her.

"If you do remove to Virginia," he told her now, his eyes twinkling, "I will come at the least once a month to offer the Holy Sacrifice, just so long as my movements are not restricted. But I suggest you take the step slowly."

"Slowly?" Margaret frowned.

"If you should hasten your departure you may appear wanting in charity," explained Father Fisher.

"I see what you mean," replied Margaret slowly. She paused a moment to think. Then she asked, "The new year, Father, surely that will be long enough to wait?"

"Yes," he agreed, nodding his head, "I think that would allow sufficient time for moderate deliberation. I doubt you would then be subject to criticism for acting rashly or in too great a hurry."

"But you know my mind is already made up?" Margaret smiled.

"Yes, I know. It was made up before I came in, eh?"

The smile left Margaret's face immediately.

"Subject to your approval, Father," she said seriously. "I determined to submit my will to your judgment. You can see the matter more impartially than I. And now, one more question, please."

"Yes?"

"Shall I respond to my Lord Baltimore's letter?"

"Yes, Margaret," replied Father Fisher, looking at her intently. "Your reply must be your unceasing prayers for him. As for writing . . . methinks the Assembly will see to that. Pray for him, pray for him, but do not write."

"I am not given to writing letters," said Margaret.

"As well in this case," replied the priest. "His Lordship wrote in temper, my child; to respond to such an outburst will not calm the waters. If you seek peace, Margaret, hold your peace."

"Oh, thank you, Father," replied Margaret gratefully. "I feel so much better. You were good to come. I will pray for you, too. And now, your blessing, please."

Margaret waited until mid-April. Then, when he came down from Virginia at her bidding, she told Giles she was ready to leave Maryland. Giles had been back and forth many times since January attending to personal business matters and putting his Maryland affairs in order so that he could remain in Virginia indefinitely.

"I am about ready, too," he told her. "Another week . . ."

"Another week! Today is Sunday, I plan to leave on Wednesday. Did you ask Tidd to bring the boat down?"

"Tidd brought me and is remaining here with the boat until we return," he told her.

"Good," said Margaret. "And now, Giles, do keep quiet about our intentions. You know how I dislike bother and farewells."

"All you want is 'Peace,' eh?"

"God knows I do," exclaimed Margaret intensely. "Virginia will be heaven for the children, too."

"Assembly is meeting this week." Giles offered the information as bait. He had a plan formulating but barely knew how to bring it to realization. As Margaret made no reply, he added, "You would not care to attend?"

She looked at him reproachfully. "You very well know, brother, I have few friends left among the Assembly. Why should I wish to expose myself to the hostile glances of those whom I have provoked in discharging my duties as executrix and attorney?"

"I see," nodded Giles, "you prefer to slip away unnoticed, is that it?"

Margaret returned him an affirmative nod.

"For shame!" he charged her.

"Giles," she protested, slowly shaking her head at him, "I declare to you I would not now entangle myself in Maryland because of Cecilius' disaffections to me and the instructions he sends against us."

"Precisely," agreed Giles, "you have spoken well. I am in full agreement. But as a Brent I, myself, will not retire permanently to Virginia without taking formal leave of Maryland. What better opportunity presents than this week's Assembly?"

"You mean to make a farewell oration? How horrible!"

Giles laughed aloud at Margaret's shocked tone.

"No," he said, "I shall not give a farewell address." Then he stopped laughing. He had a good reason to wish Margaret to visit the Assembly but he could not divulge it. He looked at her seriously. "You and I cannot simply fade from the Maryland scene, Margaret. We have been too prominent here. We must depart as proudly as we came. We go, in truth, to plant anew in another colony. We have naught to fear or to regret. We

have given our best to Maryland. We must not slink away like criminals."

Margaret pressed her lips together in resolution.

"I understand your attitude," she replied presently, "but for my part what you propose will be a most distasteful occasion. However, your arguments are sound and unanswerable. The Brents and Leonard Calvert's children will not sneak away."

"Capital!" exclaimed Giles, beaming at her and rubbing his hands together in obvious delight. "We will wait for the final session, next Saturday."

Margaret was perplexed. "I see no occasion for pleasure at the prospect," she scolded; but she suspected no ulterior motive beyond those he had already voiced.

When they arrived at St. John's Saturday morning, young William and Anne Calvert with them, the final session of the spring Assembly had already been called to order. But as the Brents entered the entire house rose in salutation. Giles' chest expanded as he waved his hand and smiled his response. Margaret visibly flushed at this unusual courtesy and graciously bowed acknowledgement.

Then Mr. Stone, the Governor, came forward to meet them, offering his arm to Margaret. She looked at him in astonishment as he escorted her to the council table and offered her a chair next his own. Giles followed with little William and Anne. Places were found for all. The children stared in wide-eyed and hushed curiosity.

"We are about to conclude our business," said William Stone to Margaret, "and we are charmed that Captain Brent prevailed upon you to honor us on this occasion."

Margaret wanted to reply, but she was confused. Turning from her, Governor Stone spoke to the clerk. "Proceed, Mr. Clerk," he ordered, "with the reading of our communication."

Slowly Margaret realized approximately what was afoot. Her cheeks crimsoned and her eyes widened. She leaned forward to look down the table at Giles. But he took no notice of her. He sat complacently gazing into space, his hands folded across his stomach.

"Giles is putting on flesh," said Margaret absently to herself.

Then she heard the voice of the clerk. As he read she stared at him intently.

To His Lordship, Baron of Baltimore, Absolute Lord and Proprietary of Marieland and Avalon, greetings:

Hereupon your Assembly of your Province of Marieland cannot choose but wonder, why your lordship should write so tartly against the people, and how your lordship could suppose it fit and necessary that those your loyal friends who lately delivered this Province from the invader should be deprived by law of their just dues from your lordship's excess for so great and good a service done and effected by them, and that it should now be required at their hands to pay a levy upon themselves.

We do also humbly request your lordship, that hereafter such things, as your lordship may desire of us, may be done with as little swearing as conveniently may be; experience teaching us that a great occasion is given to much perjury when swearing becometh common. Forfeitures, perhaps, will be more efficacious to keep men honest than swearing. Oaths little prevail upon men of little conscience.

We do further humbly request your lordship hereafter to send us no more such bodies of laws as the last received which serve to little other end than to fill our heads with suspicions, jealousies and dislikes of that which verily we understand not. Rather we shall desire your lordship to send some short heads of what is desired and then we do assure your lordship of a most forward willingness in us to give your governor all just satisfaction that can be thought reasonable by us.

As for your bitter invectives against Mistress Margaret Brent for her undertaking and meddling with your lordship's estate here we do verily believe and in conscience report that it was better for the colony's safety at that time, in her hands, than in any man's else in the whole province after your brother's death. For the soldiers would never have treated any other with that civility and respect, and though they were even ready at several times to run into mutiny yet still she pacified them — till at last, things were brought to that strait that she must be admitted and declared your lordship's attorney by an order of Court or else all must go to ruin

again, and then the second mischief had been doubtless far greater than the former.

Your deceased brother had promised to the soldiers, many now settled here, their hire and wages out of the stock or personal property upon his own or your lordship's plantations. The Mistress Brent with our full concurrence did deputize Mr. Thomas Copely who is well respected here, to receive the rents from those settled on your manor in east St. Maries, else no one might receive them and they remain a loss to you. Mr. Copely has full understanding to hold these rents for you until a determination of your long disagreement. Mistress Brent to well affected soldiers has given a few of your cattle in lieu of wages, not above eleven or twelve cows at the most of your lordship's known clear stock, and even those she had at great pains conquered again from their late unlawful possessors. Your lordship may well remember these soldiers had ventured their lives and fortunes in the defense, recovery and preservation of your lordship's province.

It is with a feeling of profound grief that we inform your lordship our well beloved friend Captain Giles Brent is removing permanently to Virginia. This will revert to the loss of your militia here as well as the deliberations of your council. It may calm your lordship's injective disposition towards her to be informed likewise that Mistress Margaret Brent is as well removing from Marieland to Virginia. We could with less pain and deep sense of loss, see one hundred gentlemen leave the Province. To Marieland's sorrow Virginia gains a valiant woman and exemplary servant of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

This letter has been read before the whole Assembly who hereto each and every one has signed his name or mark.

St. Maries in Marieland,
Saturday the 21st of April
Anno Dom 1649

A profound silence followed the reading of the Assembly's letter. William Stone turned to look at Margaret. Her face was flushed, her eyes downcast as she pressed her lips tightly together. Her fingers nervously fumbled the reticule in her lap. She knew

this moment was hers, but so great was her confusion and surprise that she found herself longing for it to pass swiftly.

It was Giles who broke the tension. Leaving his place he went to Margaret and proudly stood beside her chair. Placing a hand on her shoulder, he smiled at the Governor.

"It has been a pleasure to be with the Assembly again," he said cordially, "and my compliments on the letter to His Lordship. It is just and adequate, eh, Margaret?" He leaned over to look her in the eye.

Margaret looked up at him. She smiled without parting her lips and Giles saw that her eyes were glistening.

"Adequate," she nodded, rising. As she did so the Assembly rose, too. The Governor then escorted his guests to the door.

"God speed," he said in farewell, as brother and sister and the two Calvert children stepped out into the April sunlight.

They walked slowly down the path from St. John's Manor. Margaret looked at her brother.

"You knew about the letter?" she asked.

He did not want to reply.

"It was gratifying in a sense," she went on, "but truly unnecessary, Giles. My bitterness is gone. I am so — so —"

"Yes?" prompted Giles, looking at her intently.

"I am so impatient to begin again," Margaret continued, a ring of anticipation in her voice. "Life holds so much, Giles, so much more than one person's criticism, one person's lack of understanding and appreciation. This land is so good, so rich, so fruitful, so, — yes, so peaceful."

"That is better," agreed Giles.

"Misunderstanding and misfortune crossed our path here," Margaret admitted, "but misfortune is a challenge."

"Your old spirit has returned, Margaret," said her brother. "You are . . ."

Her smile stopped him.

"I am Margaret Brent, Adventurer," she concluded for him, "and my spirit is afire for new adventure. Virginia will know that spirit."

"And to its everlasting benefit," followed Giles with one of his characteristic, gallant bows.

So it was that the following Sunday morning after Mass, as a few old friends gathered at St. Maries dock to wish them well, Margaret, Giles and young William and Anne Calvert, set forth on the Potomac, heading north towards Aquia Creek in Virginia.

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